

1258769

Registered provider: Roc Northwest Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private company and is registered to accommodate 23 young people who have learning disabilities. It is also registered as a school and provides education on the premises.

Inspection dates: 30 to 31 January 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- Young people are flourishing in this exceptionally nurturing and supportive home. The outstandingly high quality of care they receive is meeting their individual needs and making an important difference to all of their lives. They enjoy extremely positive experiences and make very significant progress across all aspects of their development.
- Young people have very trusting and meaningful relationships with the staff. They feel cared for and are always treated with dignity and respect. They know that staff always make sure that they get the best possible support and opportunities.
- The young people's individuality is warmly regarded and respected by staff. Staff encourage the young people to make choices in their daily lives and support them to pursue their interests and enjoy their chosen activities.
- The staff team has an excellent understanding of the needs and abilities of the young people whom it cares for. Staff work effectively in partnership with parents, professionals and other services to make sure that the young people receive high-standard, focused support and care and that young people are protected.
- The managers and staff have created a culture that provides young people with a high quality of care in a positive and exceptionally supportive environment. They have high aspirations for every young person to enjoy the same opportunities and experiences as other children.
- The strong, inspirational leadership and management of this home underpins the excellent individual outcomes that the young people achieve. Staff strive to make, and are successful in making, a positive difference in the lives of each young person.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Better recording in children's records will ensure that incidents and concerns are cross-referenced and discussed, particularly at handovers and team meetings.
- The fire logbook needs to accurately record the fire drills happening in the home.
- Improved monitoring by the management team would ensure that children's records are more consistent.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
N/A		

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, 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
<p>36: Children's case records</p> <p>The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b))</p>	18/03/2018
<p>25: Fire precautions</p> <p>Ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. This is with particular reference to recording the fire drills in the fire logbook. (Regulation 25(1)(d))</p>	18/03/2018

Recommendations

- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents, such as learning from disruptions and placement breakdowns. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people enjoy exceptionally positive experiences in this nurturing, supportive and safe home. They receive an exceptional quality of care that is making an important difference to their lives. Young people who were previously non-verbal are now talking and communicating with their friends, staff and teachers at the home. One social worker commented on this outstanding achievement, saying, 'My young person has been with (home) for 3 months... is settled and is developing independence and significantly he has started to use words; he was non-verbal when he first arrived ... he is thriving in their care.'

Since young people moved in, they have become happier, healthier, safer and less likely to be at risk of abuse. They are settled, achieving in education and seeing more of their families. Young people were observed laughing, dancing to music and flapping in excitement. They shouted with glee when staff spoke with them and vocalised enjoyment around the home. One social worker commented about her young person, who has been at the home for a few months, 'Overall the experience has been positive and she is flourishing in her new environment.'

The registered manager and staff have created a warm family atmosphere where young people quickly develop a strong sense of belonging. A recent report from a local authority commissioning team wrote, 'In the main there were a number of areas of exemplary and good practice; it was felt by the visiting commissioner that (name) worked hard to settle (name) into placement.' Young people enjoy very positive and trusting relationships with staff. They know that staff enjoy spending time with them, are interested in their well-being and want what is best for young people. Staff provide young people with clear and consistent boundaries in the context of a nurturing relationship: young people know what is expected of them and how they will be treated. A young person communicated with her picture exchange communication system that she was 'happy' at the home.

The registered manager and staff always take young people's wishes and feelings into account in all of the decisions about their lives and the running of the home. This is done as a natural part of young people's daily lives. The registered manager and staff are ambitious for every young person to be happy and to enjoy life to their potential, regardless of the complexity of their needs or experiences. They provide young people with an outstanding standard of care tailored to meet their individual needs. Young people make excellent progress and improve their chances of achieving significantly better outcomes.

An independent reviewing officer said, 'A fantastic placement for the young person. She is blossoming due to consistent care and positive regard. I'm impressed.' A social worker said, 'Staff in school and home environments appear to have built good relationships with her and vice versa, and are continuously working to improve their practice by way of reflection.' The high standard of reliable and consistent support means that young people are becoming more confident, sociable and emotionally resilient. Young people

manage new experiences and challenges successfully, including moving into a new home and starting a new school.

The registered manager and staff fully take into account the particular needs of young people living a long way from their family home. Young people's moves into the home are very carefully planned to ensure that the transition into the home is as seamless as possible.

Young people see and speak regularly to their families and some young people routinely stay overnight and during the school holidays with their families. Excellent use of technology sees young people regularly using the internet to make video-calls to their parents. This is helping them to improve important relationships and to spend time with people they have not seen for some time. Their friends and families receive a warm welcome when they visit the home. Staff provide young people with a great deal of excellent emotional and practical support around seeing their families. They understand that it can be a difficult time for young people and their families, and take every effort to make sure that it is a safe and positive experience for everyone.

The registered manager and staff provide structure, stability, encouragement and opportunities for young people to take part in education and to learn and develop their knowledge and skills. Young people enjoy learning, work hard and have excellent attendance at school, which is located on the same premises. They have plenty of books, computers, art materials, toys, games and other educational resources. The staff have an excellent understanding of young people's educational needs, plans, progress, achievements and aspirations. The staff support and encourage young people's preferences and aspirations as good parents do. They have supported young people with work experience within the school canteen, which has helped to build young people's confidence.

The registered manager and staff ensure that young people live in a healthy environment that actively promotes their physical health and emotional well-being. Young people enjoy very healthy and varied diets and get plenty of physical exercise. Staff ensure that they have access to suitable support services, including child and adolescent mental health services. The home has its own clinical psychologist, speech and language therapist and registered learning disability nurse. Staff have an excellent understanding of young people's specific health needs and manage their health with sensitivity and confidence. They closely monitor young people's health to make sure that they are healthy and that they always get suitable medical advice and treatment when they are feeling unwell or when staff are concerned about young people's health. They make sure that treatment plans are consistently followed and that the arrangements for dealing with medication are safe.

Young people live in a suitably designed environment, which is a converted farmhouse and dairy farm. They have easy access to community facilities and services that are required to meet their needs. It is a homely, pleasant and comfortable facility split into smaller units, which are furnished and decorated to a high standard. The young people have plenty of personal space and their bedrooms are decorated to reflect their characters and interests.

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

The comprehensive care plans, support plans, behaviour management strategies and risk assessments devised for the support of each individual young person guide staff in how best to look after them and keep them safe from harm. Staff show an exceptional and in-depth understanding of the needs, abilities and vulnerabilities of the young people whom they support and care for.

Staff communicate with young people using their individual communication methods. These include a picture exchange card system, an individual communication passport and verbal prompts and scripts by staff to the young people. Staff also demonstrate a good understanding of the meaning of each young person's non-verbal behaviours. Effective communication between staff and the young people offers individuals the opportunity to share their views and show or tell whether they are unhappy or need help. This contributes to their protection. An independent reviewing officer said, 'The key worker demonstrated a very good understanding of the young person. They were able to tell me about the young person's needs, communication methods and abilities.'

Staff are vigilant in their care of the young people, understanding the impact of the young people's medical difficulties on their lives, and know how their medication assists them. Staff receive specialist training to ensure that they are able to respond appropriately to the young people's individual health needs and to ensure that their well-being is promoted.

Satisfactory staffing ratios on each shift mean that each young person receives the level of supervision that they need to make sure that they are kept safe at all times. No young people have gone missing from this home or have become lost while in the community.

Key workers are identified for each child and they coordinate the effective implementation of individual plans. The continuity of a core team of staff supporting each young person strengthens their knowledge of individual young people and enhances staff expertise in helping them. The young people get to know the staff who look after them and they are used to the consistent care that they receive. This helps the young people to feel secure and minimises the uncertainty of any change in their daily routines.

The safeguarding of the young people is good in all aspects of this home's care practices. Staff understand and work within the policies and protocols of the home, the local authority and the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The high awareness and actions of the staff team, regarding the employment of 'whistle-blowing' procedures to report any concerns that they may have about the quality of care provided to vulnerable young people, provide robust protection.

Communication between staff and parents, schools and professionals on the whole ensures that key information is shared, contributing to supporting and protecting the young people at all times. However, on occasion, young people's records do not accurately record incidents and matters of concern, or they are recorded in one area but not cross-referenced into another. For example, a young person assaulted a member of staff, and as a consequence, due to his high level of anxiety, he was unable to attend the Chinese new year celebrations. This was not recorded or spoken about at the

handover the next day. In addition, the consequence was not recorded, so the registered manager was unable to monitor the action taken by staff. When information is not recorded clearly or fully, it has the potential to place young people at risk.

Monitoring processes of behaviour management within the home are undertaken exceptionally well. Managers and practice-leads gather data from the comprehensive records kept for each young person. This allows staff to identify trends, patterns and triggers for incidents of challenging behaviour. They evaluate the necessity of any restraint being undertaken to ensure that young people are protected.

Managers and staff also skilfully identify where positive changes in care practice can be made. They aim to reduce young people's anxieties and decrease the need for restraint as a response to ensuring the safety of the young people. Some young people have made exceptional progress in their ability to deal with their anxieties, resulting in a significant decrease in the need for and level of restraint needed to protect them.

Staff show a high level of confidence and skill in the use of restraint to support individuals to manage their anxieties and to prevent harm to themselves or others. The staff manage young people's personal crises and episodes of very challenging behaviour effectively. They employ low-level restraint holds, undertaken for only a very brief period of time, to protect the young people and help them to manage any unsafe or harming behaviour, such as head-banging, pulling hair or biting.

The physical environment of the home provides a safe place for the young people to live in. Regular health and safety, fire and utility checks are undertaken. Although fire drills take place they had not been recorded in the fire logbook. The logbook recorded that the last fire drill in the home was in September 2017 and so it appeared that it was out of timescales by a few weeks.

Managers rigorously adhere to the organisation's recruitment and selection procedures to ensure that vetting checks on prospective employees are undertaken.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has managed this home since it moved to new premises in July 2017. However, she was previously the registered manager on the old site from October 2016. Her substantial experience and good knowledge of working with young people who have disabilities underpins her strong and effective leadership of the staff team. The registered manager is well supported by senior managers in the organisation and in the home by its cohesive senior management team. This home delivers a child-centred service that strives to provide an exemplary standard of individualised care to young people who have disabilities.

The registered manager shows an excellent understanding of the home's strengths and areas of competence and the progress and experiences of the young people looked after. Action plans are in place to tackle identified aspects of the home's operation that require further development to continue to improve outcomes for the young people. The registered manager has a strong interest in keeping up to date with the latest evidence-based research and uses this information to drive forward the standard of care provided

to the young people. Her enthusiasm, commitment and collaborative approach encourage others in the development of innovative care for individual young people.

An independent visitor provides rigorous and impartial scrutiny of the running of the home and how effectively children's welfare is promoted and safeguarded. He talks to the children, their families and social workers to help him make judgements. The registered manager always acts promptly on his recommendations to improve practice.

The oversight of care practice by the registered manager and senior management team is satisfactory, which ensures that every young person is well looked after and safe. They examine records to assure themselves that young people's needs are appropriately responded to by all staff. They make sure that the young people receive the help and support that they may need when new behaviours or needs emerge.

This home is well managed and organised. Good systems are in place that are understood, and the delegation of responsibilities within the staff team results in a well-run home. Staff take pride in undertaking their specific roles and accountabilities and they increase and develop their expertise and skills in particular areas of their work with the young people.

The home has developed its own induction programme that is tailored to fit the needs of new employees working in this home. It is a comprehensive programme, which staff find valuable in supporting them when they commence working in this home. Regular staff performance reviews, supervision, team meetings, house meetings and training support staff in undertaking their work with young people effectively. Staff morale is high. The team works well together and staff feel extremely well supported.

The staff are warm, enthusiastic and highly competent people. They are focused on working to promote young people's best interests. They are strongly committed to helping young people and have high aspirations for young people to reach their full potential. They are calm and confident, and show patience, perseverance and resilience when dealing with complex and challenging situations. The staff team is suitably qualified and has plenty of opportunities for continuing professional development, through training which is relevant to the assessed needs of the young people, and through gaining additional qualifications in working with young people and in management.

Positive working relationships exist between the home and parents, schools, professionals and other services. Strong partnership working is effective in providing good-quality and consistent care for the young people. Professionals emphasise partnership working as a strength of this home. They said, 'Staff have a very good relationship with the young person's parent,' and, 'Liaison between home and school has improved to join up plans to provide a continuity of care for the young person.'

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children

and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

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: 1258769

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Roc Northwest Limited

Registered provider address: Roc Northwest Ltd, Roc House, Ward Green Lane, Ribchester, Preston, Lancashire PR3 3YB

Responsible individual: Katie Stephens

Registered manager: Lindsay Tallon

Inspectors

Elaine Clare, social care inspector

Lisa Gregoire-Parker, social care inspector

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