

SC464809

Registered provider: Roc Northwest Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is one of a number of homes operated by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for five children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 June 2017

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 8 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Requires improvement

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people experience positive outcomes as a result of the individualised support they receive.
- Parents, external professionals and young people themselves speak highly of the home and express confidence in the manager and staff.
- Young people are encouraged to express their views and opinions. Managers and staff listen to young people's views and act on them.
- Staff understand the importance of education and ensure that young people receive the support they need to make good progress.
- Managers and staff recognise when young people require specialist support and are proactive in ensuring that this is provided.
- Managers and staff understand the risks to young people's safety and well-being and ensure that risks are carefully managed. Young people are protected from harm and feel safe, as a result of the support they receive.
- Managers and staff respond effectively to safeguarding concerns and work positively with outside agencies to promote young people's safety and welfare.
- There has been significant improvement in the way staff support young people's behaviours, which has resulted in a notable decrease in incidents.
- The management team provide a supportive environment for staff. Increased training and supervision has helped staff to develop their skills and enhance their practice.
- The management team demonstrates a strong commitment to constant improvement and takes decisive action when areas for development are identified
- Managers have developed internal quality assurance monitoring systems, to help drive improvements forward and to help ensure that these improvements are sustained.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Ensure that young people's risk assessments are continuously updated to include any new information, so that staff have up-to-date guidance in promoting young people's safety and well-being.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/02/2017	Full	Requires improvement
27/10/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
01/03/2016	Full	Outstanding
19/08/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people who live at the home receive a good standard of care and support, which is tailored to meet their individual needs. For some young people, their progress has been outstanding and they are experiencing very positive outcomes in areas such as family contact, education and behaviour. Parents and external professionals speak highly of the home and the impact the service has had on young people's lives. A parent commented, 'I am amazed how far [name of child] has come since he moved there. He is doing brilliantly and that is down to the staff.'

One young person has experienced some stalling in their progress. The manager has been quick to recognise this and has taken decisive action to address the situation. This has included positive partnership working and ongoing communication with external agencies to ensure that the young person receives the specialised support he needs.

The majority of young people who live at the home have done so for several years. Their placements are stable and unplanned discharges do not occur. This is because careful consideration is given as to whether a young person's needs can be met, before they are offered a place at the home. Since the last inspection, one young person has left the home in a planned move towards semi-independence. During the inspection, that young person made contact with the home to say hello to staff and young people and update them on his positive progress.

During the last inspection of the home, some young people expressed mixed views about the quality of their relationships with staff. Their comments included that they felt some staff were overly strict. Senior managers have taken decisive action in relation to

this feedback and worked closely with the staff team to address the area. The staff team has been supported to adopt a more positive approach and staff's practice has been enhanced. This is reflected in improved relationships between staff and young people.

Young people described a positive atmosphere in their home and commented that they felt everyone got along better. Young people said that they felt comfortable with staff and that routines in their home were less rigid. One young person said, 'They [the staff] are not all about the rules anymore.' This information was supported by observations of young people and staff interacting in a positive and relaxed manner. This improvement has also been identified by an external professional, who recently reported, 'I do believe that the staff and young people have changed in their approaches. They appear to be much more relaxed and there is less tension around the home, with young people and staff engaging positively.'

Managers have taken time to consult young people about their views and opinions of the home. They have listened to young people's views and this has resulted in some changes. For example, there is more flexibility in relation to daily routines and a more personalised approach when setting expectations of young people. The inspectors spoke with one young person who commented at the last inspection that he was keen to leave the home and wanted to move to independent living as soon as possible. This young person now feels that expectations of him, for example agreed times to be home in the evening, are now more age-appropriate and fair. He commented that he would now be happy to stay at the home until he is 18.

Young people are supported to maintain good health. Arrangements for routine medical support, such as regular dental and optician checks, are effective and help to ensure that young people stay well. Specific healthcare needs are identified and the manager and staff work in partnership with outside agencies to ensure that these are met.

Young people are strongly supported to maintain important relationships. Their care plans provide details of any support they require in order to attend contact with family members. There are a number of examples of very positive pieces of work with young people and their families, which has resulted in increased opportunities to spend time together. A parent commented that they were very pleased to be enjoying increased contact with their son. Supporting close relationships promotes young people's emotional well-being.

Young people have experienced some very positive educational outcomes. One young person has recently completed his first college year having achieved excellent attendance. He is now thinking seriously about applying for a university place and is looking forward to staff supporting him in investigating his options for courses. Another young person, who was in receipt of a significantly reduced provision at the time of his admission to the home, has now progressed to attending school on a full-time basis. Evidence shows that staff have worked closely with his school to ensure that he receives the support he needs.

Positive work is ongoing with young people to assist them in increasing their skills for independence. Each young person has an individualised plan in place, which details their specific learning needs and tracks their progress in acquiring daily living skills. One young person described how he now managed an independence budget successfully and

described a number of skills he had learned. He was also very pleased to be planning driving lessons. Staff work closely with the placing authorities of those young people nearing the age of independence, to ensure that appropriate plans are in place for any ongoing support they may need.

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

Managers and staff have a good understanding of the risks to young people's safety and well-being. Risks are clearly identified and there are clear measures in place to help staff support young people safely and effectively.

Since the last inspection, young people's individual risk assessments have been reviewed to ensure that they encompass all the issues affecting each young person. This has resulted in staff having increased awareness of some high-risk areas and the action required to keep young people safe. While the quality of risk assessments has improved, as have arrangements for ensuring that they are regularly updated, this process could be improved further to ensure that any new information is taken into account when reviewing young people's care plans. This will help ensure that staff have all the information they need to keep young people safe.

Managers and staff work in partnership with outside agencies to help promote young people's safety and well-being. For example, a recent concern was identified about one young person, which was very quickly referred by the deputy manager to the relevant agencies. As a result, additional support for the young person has been quickly put in place.

Individualised 'missing from home' risk assessments and protocols are in place, which provide clear guidance for staff about the steps they should follow if a young person becomes missing from home. Incidents of young people being missing from this home do not occur on a regular basis. On the occasions that they do occur, staff take robust action to help ensure that young people are safeguarded while they are missing.

Relationships between young people are generally good and closely monitored. Bullying risk assessments are in place and any incidents of bullying are usually recorded. However, it was noted during this inspection that one incident of bullying had not been recorded in the log provided for this purpose. It is important that care is taken to ensure that the log is accurate, so that staff can identify any worrying patterns and address them.

Since the last inspection, all staff have received updated training in safeguarding young people. In addition, whistleblowing training has been refreshed and managers have carried out workshops with staff about the importance of raising concerns. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the processes to follow in the event that they identify a concern, and express confidence in managers to support them in raising any such concerns.

There has been significant improvement in how staff support young people's behaviours. Senior managers and experts from within the organisation have worked closely with staff to assist them in enhancing their practice in this area. There has been some positive work with staff in assisting them to understand young people's emotional responses and

the importance of effective de-escalation.

Each young person has had the opportunity to be involved in the development of their own behaviour support plan. Young people have engaged in this process well and the plans contain a good level of detail about how they feel they can be best helped to manage their emotions when they are becoming anxious, distressed or frustrated. The result of this positive work is that staff are managing to de-escalate situations more effectively, and incidents of young people being physically restrained have significantly reduced.

Young people have also been invited to share their views about expectations and boundaries, in terms of what they feel is reasonable, and how staff should respond when these are broken. This has had a positive impact, in that young people are engaging well with boundaries and, on occasions when consequences are used, these are accepted by the young people. This positive approach to behaviour management helps young people to develop their understanding of safe and appropriate behaviour.

Young people express confidence in the manager and the staff and say they would feel comfortable in talking to them if they had any concerns or worries. One young person said, 'I feel like I can really talk to them and they will sort things out for me. They have always got time for you now.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has experienced some changes in leadership due to the resignation of the previous registered manager. However, the provider has taken swift action to ensure that arrangements are in place to provide safe and effective leadership. A suitably qualified and experienced manager has been appointed and has started the process of registration with Ofsted.

The new manager demonstrates a clear vision for the service and a strong commitment to providing high-quality care that is centred on young people's needs. She shows high ambition for young people and communicates clear expectations to the staff team.

External professionals speak highly of the service and describe a good level of communication with managers and staff. One professional described the home as being 'very well led' and expressed confidence in the service to provide good-quality, individualised care.

The manager demonstrates a clear understanding of young people's needs and works positively with external agencies to ensure that their needs are met. For example, a detailed chronology is in place, which demonstrates a proactive and persistent approach by the manager to secure specialist input for one young person who has some complex needs. The manager has positively challenged outside agencies to ensure that this input is provided.

A number of requirements were raised following the last inspection of the home, including a requirement in relation to effective leadership and management. Senior managers from the organisation responded with decisive action, developing a detailed action plan addressing the issues raised.

Additional management resources, including a significant increase in the input of senior managers, have been in place. Senior managers have worked alongside the staff team to closely monitor practice and drive forward the necessary improvements. This robust response demonstrates that the management team is committed to improving standards and the experiences and outcomes for young people.

Staff communicate pride in the improvements that have been achieved and describe a highly supportive environment within which they are encouraged to reflect on their practice daily. Group de-briefs take place on a daily basis, where staff are encouraged to have open and constructive discussions about the day's events and their practice. This helps to create a positive culture, where staff can express their views and constructively challenge each other.

Since the last inspection, all staff have benefitted from updated training in areas which include safeguarding, whistle-blowing and behaviour management. This refresher training, along with increased management support, has helped to enhance the staff team's skills and confidence in supporting the young people. One staff member commented, 'The fact they want to help you develop makes you feel valued.'

The manager demonstrates a clear understanding of the strengths of the service and areas for development. Following a robust effort to address requirements raised at the last inspection, the manager is now in the process of developing a comprehensive development plan. Staff and young people have been invited to share their ideas for development and have positively engaged in this process.

Arrangements to monitor the quality and safety of the service have been reviewed and improved. This will help to ensure that improvements are sustained and that any decline in standards can be quickly identified and addressed. The manager ensures that the progress made by each young person is closely monitored. As a result, young people's experiences and outcomes are understood and carefully considered as part of the ongoing quality assurance programme.

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 difference 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 who 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: SC464809

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Roc Northwest Ltd

Registered provider address: Roc Northwest Ltd, 41 Silverdale Road, Arnside, Carnforth LA5 0AL

Responsible individual: Katie Stephens

Registered manager: Post Vacant

Inspector

Marie Cordingley, social care regulatory inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2017