

SC483692

Registered provider: Roc Northwest Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to accommodate four young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities. The home is owned by a private organisation.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 October 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	Outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
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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: 9 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- Young people experience highly positive outcomes due to the quality of care and support that they receive.
- Young people enjoy positive and trusting relationships with staff who genuinely care about their welfare.
- Staff strongly support young people's education. All young people are achieving good attendance and progressing well at school or further education.
- The needs of young people moving from the home, and moving to the home, are carefully considered and sensitively managed.
- Risks to the safety and well-being of children and young people are clearly identified and carefully managed. Young people are effectively safeguarded.
- Staff are skilled in understanding young people's emotional responses and help them to develop safe and appropriate behaviours.
- Young people are helped to develop skills and learning that support their personal safety.
- There is a strong child-centred ethos at this home, which is evident in the day-to-day care that young people receive.
- Young people are cared for by a highly motivated, well-trained team of staff.
- The registered manager actively seeks ways to continually improve the service and outcomes experienced by young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
13/10/2016	Full	Outstanding
17/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/09/2015	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people receive outstanding care and support, which is thoughtfully planned to meet their individual needs. As a result of the care that young people receive, they make excellent progress and their life chances are enhanced.

There is a stable group of young people who have lived in the home for several years and have all recently reached the age of independence. Since the last inspection, three of the four young people have moved on from the home. Prior to their move, the young people engaged in a very well-structured independence programme, during which they were supported to develop their skills and independence. In addition to developing the practical skills required to live in an independent setting, the young people were supported to manage the emotional impact of moving on from the home, and from each other.

Staff work in partnership with external professionals and support young people closely through their transitions. For example, the staff assisted the young people who have recently moved on from the home to choose and prepare their new accommodation. The three young people keep in touch with staff and often contact staff for advice and support. One of the young people took time to visit the home during the inspection to talk about the support he had received. He said, 'It was sad to leave, but it was time. They [the staff] have been brilliant. I know they are always there for me. They have even invited me for Christmas dinner!' A relative of another young person who recently left commented, 'They have been absolutely amazing. The care they have given him has completely turned his life around.'

Two young people have recently moved into the home. The registered manager considered their needs very carefully and ensured that the home was the right one for them before offering them a place. The young people's move into the home was carefully planned and sensitively managed. As a result, they have settled extremely well and are making very positive progress.

Young people describe the home in very positive ways. Their comments include, 'This home is better than outstanding! Let's just call it perfect!' 'We are always doing nice things and I've got some nice things now.' 'It always feels lovely here.' A relative of one young person said, 'I simply cannot express how much they have done for [X]. Moving there has been the best thing that has ever happened in his life.'

External professionals speak extremely highly of the registered manager and staff. Several commented on the highly positive relationships between young people and staff. A social worker said, 'Not only is it evident to outside people like me that the staff are completely dedicated to the young people, it is evident to the young people themselves. This is why they flourish.'

Each young person has a detailed care plan, which focuses on their strengths, needs and wishes. There are clear goals, which reflect the things that are important to young people. Young people's progress is regularly reviewed to ensure that their care continues to meet their needs. Staff support young people in a sensitive way and are responsive to

their needs. They are quick to identify and act on any potential issues, for example, changes in a young person's behaviour or mood.

Staff ensure that young people have a voice by strongly supporting them to express their views and wishes. Young people share their ideas about menus and activities, for instance, and staff ensure that their choices are included in day-to-day arrangements. Individual key-work sessions provide young people with the opportunity to discuss their own care and progress. Staff also ensure that young people have the opportunity to access independent advocacy services. One young person has recently been supported to access an independent advocate to assist him in expressing his views to an outside agency. Listening and acting on young people's views promotes their sense of worth and increases their confidence.

All the young people have made positive progress in education. One young person recently completed a college course and is currently engaging in some positive activities with the Prince's Trust. The other young people are attending school on a full-time basis and, since their admission to the home, have achieved 100% attendance. An education professional from one school described the progress of a young person as 'fantastic', adding that, since the young person's admission to the home, many school staff had noticed a huge improvement in his presentation, behaviour and general mood. The education professional also described highly effective and supportive communication from the home.

Young people enjoy a variety of fun and fulfilling experiences. They regularly take part in activities such as go-karting, cinema trips and swimming, and enjoy annual holidays. One young person recently requested a trip to Blackpool to see the illuminations and fireworks. This was arranged and enjoyed by all. Another young person was supported by staff to his first ever football match. He said he enjoyed this very much and proudly showed the inspector his new football shirt. Young people's talents are recognised and supported and they are encouraged to learn new skills. Three young people recently started driving lessons and have taken their driving theory tests. Supporting young people to engage in meaningful activities increases their confidence and enables them to develop their abilities.

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

Young people enjoy secure and trusted relationships with staff. They are able to talk with staff if something is upsetting them or causing them to feel worried. As a result, they feel safe. One young person said, 'I know things will be right here. It's OK to say things if you need to. You can say it and they would listen.'

Managers and staff are able to identify risks to young people's safety or well-being. When they do so, risks are carefully assessed and clear plans are implemented to help keep young people safe. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed to ensure that they reflect any changes in the young person's needs. Managers are proactive and ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge necessary to support young people in a safe manner. For example, following the identification of a potential risk relating to the behaviour of one young person, relevant training was immediately commissioned for the whole staff team.

All staff are provided with safeguarding training at the start of their employment. This training is regularly renewed to help ensure that staff maintain their knowledge and are kept up to date with any changes in guidance. All staff demonstrate clear understanding of their responsibilities and confidently describe reporting procedures. Staff express confidence in their immediate managers, and managers within the organisation, to address any safeguarding matters effectively. A clear whistle-blowing policy ensures that staff are aware of any action they should take in the event that they have any concerns.

There is a clear focus on the importance of equipping young people with the skills and knowledge to keep themselves safe. Regular, structured work is carried out with young people, both on an individual and group basis, to assist them in learning about important aspects of personal safety. These include areas such as safe relationships, alcohol and substance misuse, and internet safety. Young people's meetings regularly include an educational session on a specific area, which is followed by a quiz. Other innovative ideas have been used to aid young people's learning, including some creative work in relation to child sexual exploitation.

Some young people have been admitted to the home with a history of being missing from home. However, incidents of young people being missing from this home rarely occur. On the few occasions when this has happened, staff have worked proactively with partner agencies, such as the police, to help to ensure that the young person involved is safeguarded. The reduction in missing incidents for all young people who live at the home demonstrates that young people are safer due to the care and support that they receive.

Some young people have previously been at risk due to risk-taking behaviours. For example, some young people have arrived at the home with high levels of anti-social behaviour, offending and difficulties with rules and boundaries. Due to the support provided at the home and the positive relationships that young people have with staff, these behaviours have discontinued. Young people use their free time safely and engage in positive friendships. For all young people, this is outstanding progress from their starting points.

Positive behaviour management is a particular strength of this home. Staff consistently promote positive behaviour by recognising and rewarding young people's achievements on a daily basis. Young people respond well to this approach and, as a result, the use of sanctions or consequences is rarely required.

Staff are skilled in understanding young people's emotional responses and support young people to manage their feelings and behaviour in a safe way. Records of incidents demonstrate that staff focus on de-escalating potentially volatile situations before they reach crisis point. As a result, there are very few incidents of restraint or physical intervention. Any that do take place are carefully recorded and monitored by managers to ensure that they have been carried out in a safe and appropriate manner. In addition, any young person involved in such an incident is encouraged to speak with an external advocate. This helps to ensure that the young person has the opportunity to raise any concerns about the incident with an independent person.

Young people are cared for in a safe and comfortable home. The home is well maintained and furnished to a high standard. A variety of fire and safety checks are

carried out on a regular basis. This helps to ensure that any potential safety issues are dealt with quickly and that young people's safety and well-being is promoted.

There are well-established recruitment procedures in place, which means that all new staff members are carefully recruited. All prospective employees are required to undergo a range of background checks before they are offered employment. This helps to ensure that only the most suitable adults of good character are in contact with young people and this, therefore, helps to safeguard young people.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home benefits from the leadership of a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager. He is supported by a highly committed deputy manager. Both managers demonstrate strong person-centred values and high ambition for the young people in their care. It was identified during the inspection that some changes to the management team are planned. The registered manager will be leaving the service in the near future and a new registered manager will be appointed. Careful consideration has been given to the new management arrangements, to ensure that the home continues to provide outstanding outcomes for young people.

Managers have highly effective relationships with outside services and external agencies. The feedback from professionals involved with the service is extremely positive. A social worker commented, 'I honestly can't commend this placement and the colleagues within this placement enough. It is evident during my visits that they truly adopt a child-centred approach and they are excellent at ensuring that they keep in communication with me.' While maintaining positive working relationship, managers are able to challenge external agencies on behalf of young people where necessary. These effective relationships help to ensure that young people receive effective and responsive care.

Young people benefit from regular opportunities to engage with senior managers from the organisation. During the inspection, a senior manager attended the home and had a meal with the young people. It was evident that she knew the young people well and that the young people were familiar and comfortable in her presence.

There is a culture of high aspiration and ambition for the young people, which is communicated by all. Staff are highly motivated and proud of the home. They show dedication and a strong commitment towards the outcomes and experiences of young people, with a clear goal of improving the lives and life chances of young people.

Staff express confidence in managers and describe them as highly supportive. They express satisfaction with the training and ongoing support that they receive and describe a positive and open culture. One staff member said, 'This is the sort of home where everyone wants to work.'

The training and development of staff is managed in a highly effective way. Each staff member has a detailed development plan in place, which includes their personal goals, strengths and areas for development. These are regularly reviewed and managers regularly discuss new learning opportunities with staff.

The comprehensive training programme is closely aligned with young people's needs.

For example, if a young person is diagnosed with a particular health condition or specific need that is not covered by the standard training programme, managers arrange the relevant training immediately. As a result, young people receive their care from skilled and knowledgeable staff.

Staff with supervisory roles, such as senior care workers, receive management training to support them in their role. This training includes areas such as supervising staff and safe recruitment. One senior worker said, 'They really invest in you. It feels like they want to develop you.' Another staff member commented, 'The training here is brilliant. There is always something new!'

Managers constantly look for ways to develop the service. They are aware of the home's strengths and weaknesses and are open and transparent about their areas for development. They keenly invite feedback from young people, staff and other stakeholders and are able to demonstrate action taken in response to people's ideas.

The registered manager makes effective use of quality monitoring. There is an extensive audit tool in place which enables managers to monitor all aspects of quality and safety on a regular basis. Some aspects of the audit tool specifically relate to the experiences and outcomes for young people. This demonstrates that the management of the home is centred on young people.

Effective systems are in place to notify Ofsted and other relevant agencies of any significant events. This means that relevant people are kept informed and young people's welfare is promoted. Adverse incidents and near misses are carefully reviewed. As a result, the registered manager is able to reflect and learn from events that happen in order to minimise risks and prevent reoccurrence. This means that young people benefit from a service which is continually improving.

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: SC483692

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: Peter Birkby

Inspector

Marie Cordingley, social care inspector

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