

SC483688

Registered provider: Roc Northwest Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private company. The home provides care and support for up to seven young people who can no longer live at home.

The manager has been in post since May 2019. He has applied to Ofsted to be the registered manager.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 October 2019

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: 11 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/07/2018	Full	Good
11/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/04/2017	Full	Outstanding
24/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>In particular, this relates to the staff’s use of language.</p>	29/11/2019
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(c))</p>	29/11/2019
<p>The registered person must maintain records (“case records”) for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date; and</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	29/11/2019

<p>In particular, ensure that young people's plans remain current and demonstrate the care and support needed to help them to move on in their lives.</p>	
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Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9) In particular, ensure that the home is decorated to a good standard, repairs are carried out quickly and all areas of the home are clean.
- Regulation 11(2) sets out the expectations on staff in building a positive relationship with each child and helping the child develop skills to have positive relationships with others. 'Others' includes individuals both inside and outside the home such as other young people, staff and family members. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 38, paragraph 8.6) In particular, ensure that the young people are given consistent messages about the use of appropriate language.
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people are happy and settled in the home. They enjoy spending time with staff both in the home and on activities. Young people are increasingly confident to talk to staff about things that are worrying them. This is because they know that the staff will help them to work through their worries. For some young people, this has meant a reduction in the number of staff caring for them at any one time.

Young people receive personalised care and support delivered by staff who know them well. As a result, young people's self-esteem and confidence in their own abilities are increasing. Some care plans and other documents are not current. The manager is aware of this and is acting to address the issue. The impact of this shortfall is greatly reduced because staff are aware of the current needs of each young person.

Young people are engaging better in their health appointments and therapeutic support. Staff implement effective strategies to support young people at these appointments, for example planning activities prior to returning home to help them to process what is happening. This has seen a reduction in incidents for young people.

Young people are consulted widely on all aspects of their care, including the activities they are involved in and the organisation of the home. Consequently, young people have a sense of belonging. One young person asked staff if he could move into the annex as he was struggling in the main house. This happened and has greatly reduced the young

person's anxieties and helped him to form a solid friendship with another young person.

One young person is a skilled skateboarder. This is actively encouraged by staff and has resulted in other young people trying to learn this skill. Other young people enjoy playing computer games against one another. This helps young people to develop a sense of fair play and sportsmanship.

Staff want the best for the young people that they care for. The staff work effectively with schools to support young people's education. A head teacher said that their collaborative work with staff has helped to improve the educational outcomes for young people. Staff's commitment to ensuring that young people get the right therapeutic support means that the young people are more able to engage with their learning.

Young people are becoming more independent. They help to do their own laundry, plan meals and activities, and purchase their clothes and other personal items. Moves in and out of the home are planned well. Young people who have moved on are doing well in their own homes because they understand the importance of paying their bills and budgeting for food and other household items.

Maintaining contact with families and other people who are important to the young people is managed well. Social workers praised staff's commitment to building positive relationships with family members, which has enabled some families to become more involved in their child's life. Young people enjoy spending time with their families and friends.

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

Safeguarding practice at the home is good and promotes the welfare and safety of the young people. Staff are trained in safeguarding and understanding child sexual exploitation, county lines and e-safety. Consequently, staff have the skills and knowledge to observe, identify any potential concerns and act to protect the young people.

Staff have a secure understanding of the young people's individual vulnerabilities. They understand the external and internal factors that can impact upon a young person's safety and take positive steps to reduce these risks, such as being missing from care.

There has recently been a spike in one young person being missing from the home. Staff act quickly to any incidents and work in partnership with the family and other professionals to ensure that the young person is found quickly and is safe.

Behaviour management support and strategies are usually consistently applied. This has resulted in a significant decrease in the number of physical interventions within the home. On several occasions, staff have used inappropriate language when talking to or about young people. This has been rigorously addressed by the manager. However, this use of language is not effective in helping young people to reduce swearing or use of racist language and does not help them to be respectful to others.

The home is a large family home with an annex and a school in the grounds. Young people relish the opportunities to explore their surroundings. Some areas of the home are looking distinctly tired and worn. Some paintwork is dirty, and some maintenance issues have not been addressed. These issues do not pose a risk to young people; however, they detract from the homely environment the manager is striving to create.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by an experienced manager. He was appointed in May 2019 and is awaiting the final checks to become the registered manager. He is supported well by the two qualified deputy managers.

The manager is in the process of introducing changes to the paperwork and recording systems. These changes are taking time to become embedded, and as a result there are currently several shortfalls in record keeping, including records of care plans, healthcare and debriefs from interventions. The manager is aware of this and has plans in place to support staff and ensure that paperwork is completed to the same good standard as before.

One complaint has occurred since the last inspection. This was investigated initially as a complaint but on reflection was a disciplinary matter and has been addressed. Safer recruitment and probationary practices are applied effectively and have seen some staff leave after their probationary period.

Staff access a range of training opportunities, both face-to-face and online. Staff say that this training has been beneficial to enhancing their knowledge and understanding on subjects such as county lines. However, staff would benefit from training in relation to the use of racist language, trust and respect.

Staff supervisions and appraisals are up to date. Staff also have regular opportunities to discuss issues as a team at team meetings. Staff undertake their own research and attend conferences, such as one on 'playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy'. They share their findings with their colleagues effectively.

Partnership working is a strength of the service. The manager and staff are not afraid to challenge professionals or escalate their concerns if they feel a young person is not getting the right support. This has resulted in positive outcomes for individual young people.

Internal and external monitoring is sound. The manager has a secure understanding of the strengths and areas for development. Young people, staff and professionals all have a voice in helping to drive forward improvements in the home. Actions are highlighted in the home's development strategy so that the home can move forward.

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: SC483688

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Roc Northwest Ltd

Registered provider address: 5th Floor, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Katie Stephens

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspector

Chris Scully, social care inspector

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