

## Children's homes inspection-Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>01/03/2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC464809</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>ROC Northwest Limited</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>Heyes House, 41 Silverdale Road, Arnside, Carnforth, Lancashire LA5 0AL</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Katie Stephens</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Marcus Oates</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Mandy Williams</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>01/03/2016</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Sustained effectiveness</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>

## SC464809

### Summary of findings

<b>The children's home provision is outstanding because:</b>
<p><b>Outcomes for young people:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Young people make significant progress across all areas of their development following admission to the home.</li> <li>■ Young people enjoy positive and respectful relationships with staff and also with each other.</li> <li>■ Young people's educational attendance and attainment has significantly improved since admission to the home.</li> <li>■ Young people are able to access a range of activities both inside and outside of the home.</li> <li>■ Young people's independence skills have significantly improved. They have grown in confidence and their anxieties about living independently are reducing.</li> <li>■ Young people have easy access to an advocate. They are encouraged to seek this additional support.</li> </ul>

**Leadership and Management:**

- Managers are approachable, available and well respected by the staff team.
- Excellent relationships with outside agencies exist.
- Management monitoring is of a high standard and used effectively to drive forward improvements in the home.
- Managers request regular feedback from young people, their family members and involved professionals, in order to improve the service provided.
- Staffing ratios are high, enabling staff to spend individual time with young people.
- Managers are keen to engage the staff team in the development of the home. They acknowledge good practice and staff initiative. They invest in staff development.

**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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
Ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation (Regulation 39(3)).	01/04/2016

**Recommendations**

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendation:

- Ensure that records kept of the administration of medication are clear and legible, and that any errors identified by auditing are documented ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', para. 7.15).

## Full report

### 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 up to five children and young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and learning disabilities.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/08/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/01/2015	CH - Full	Good
01/07/2014	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/01/2014	CH - Full	Good

### Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<p>Living in this home has a positive impact on outcomes for young people. The young people receive consistent care, clear boundaries and good routines. Very positive and respectful relationships between staff and young people are evident. This is key to young people wanting to invest in the home. One young person said, 'I am always looked after well. People treat you with respect here.' Young people soon become confident in the standard of care that they can expect to receive. This reduces their anxiety, and they begin to feel safe here. They settle into the routines of the home, their disruptive behaviours decrease and improvements are soon evident across all areas of their development.</p> <p>Staff are knowledgeable about the needs of those they care for. Young people are cared for in accordance with their personalised placement plans. Good quality care planning ensures that young people's targets are regularly reviewed, and focus on addressing areas of specific need. Comprehensive monthly reports document the</p>	

progress that young people are making. Social workers find these particularly helpful.

Young people's educational attendance and attainment improve when they are living here. Some young people have successfully re-engaged with education, despite having not attended for some considerable time prior to living here. Social workers are particularly positive about the commitment shown by staff to achieve this. Staff provide support to some young people within the educational setting. They have also successfully sourced work-experience placements for them. Social workers say, 'This is an example of staff going the extra mile.'

Young people are healthy and access services appropriate to their needs. Staff provide young people with information about a range of health-related issues, so that they can make their own informed choices. Information on the effects of alcohol, drugs, and smoking are examples. Young people have successfully reduced their recreational use of these substances as a result.

Young people have access to a range of recreational activities. The majority choose to engage in these activities with staff and other young people resident in the home. Currently, young people enjoy swimming, football and going to the trampoline park. Staff also encourage young people to attend social activities in the community. For example, young people attend youth club, boxing and rugby. This helps to ensure that young people are fit and healthy, and plays a significant role in improving their self-esteem and confidence. Young people also enjoyed a holiday to Greece last summer, and are planning another holiday abroad this year.

Staff ensure that young people are able to maintain contact with their families and friends. They demonstrate a thorough understanding of the individual circumstances of each young person. Staff will facilitate contact, even if this involves transporting the young person some distance. This ensures that young people are able to maintain these important relationships. Staff work pro-actively with parents and in the best interest of the young person. One social worker commented, 'Staff give 100%. They are very obliging when arranging contact. The quality of reports is also excellent.' Similarly, one young person said, 'Staff care for us loads. They put effort into getting our contact sorted.'

Staff support young people to learn the skills that they will require to live independently in the future. Young people start by learning to keep their rooms clean, doing their own laundry, and learning to use public transport safely and confidently. They then follow a more formal programme, where they manage their own budget, when they are approaching transition. This ensures that young people feel prepared for their move. One social worker commented, 'Staff are great at promoting independence. They work alongside the young person. They do things with him and not to him.'

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>Young people who live in this home are safe. Staff engage in safe caring practice, and the home's procedures ensure that they are clear about their responsibilities in ensuring the safety and welfare of young people. Staff make it clear to young people that bullying is not acceptable, and they foster an atmosphere of acceptance and tolerance. Positive relationships exist between the young people for the majority of the time. However, high staff ratios ensure that staff are alert to any conflict between the young people. When issues are identified, staff work with the young people involved to help them to come to a mutual understanding. Young people confirm that this restorative approach is effective.</p> <p>Personalised risk assessments identify the risks pertinent to each young person, and ensure that staff understand the most appropriate method of responding to these behaviours. These receive immediate update following any incident, so that staff are alert to any heightened behaviours of concern. They also receive regular review, enabling a reduction to risk ratings, as young people learn to manage their own behaviours.</p> <p>Staff understand and implement the local missing from care protocols. Partnership working with the police and other safeguarding agencies is effective. Young people do go missing from the home on occasion, but there has been a significant reduction in these behaviours for some. Records demonstrate that staff undertake an appropriate search of the local area, and attempt to contact the young person on their mobile telephone or through their known associates. Good-quality records are kept, outlining the actions that staff have taken. Staff ensure that the young person is welcomed on their return. Key working also ensures that the young person understands the vulnerable position that they place themselves in on these occasions. The reduction in these episodes shows that young people are investing in the home, and that they are able to talk to staff and feel listened to.</p> <p>Young people benefit from consistent behaviour-management strategies. The ethos of the home is to value young people and to reward their achievements. Young people are successfully learning how to manage their own behaviour. Staff work with them to develop alternative and more effective strategies with which to manage their emotions on the next occasion. Young people respond well to this approach and believe that staff really do understand and want to help them.</p> <p>Staff recruitment processes are thorough, preventing unsuitable adults from gaining employment in the home. Any allegations made about staff are taken seriously. The registered manager consults appropriately with the local authority designated officer about any issues that do occur.</p>	

Young people feel listened to. They have many opportunities to express their views. Weekly young people’s meetings provide a venue for group discussion. They also complete regular feedback questionnaires, for the registered manager, on what it is like to live in the home, as well as on individual staff members. Advocacy is also championed in this home. An independent advocate visits the home regularly. This ensures that she is a familiar person to young people and allows them easy access to an independent adult, should they need one. Young people do consult with the advocate. On one occasion, a young person expressed a concern to the advocate that was duly passed on and investigated as a complaint. However, despite this, the registered manager did not log this in the complaints’ record.

Staff are vigilant to the risks of social networking and the internet. However, young people do have access to these media. Staff work with young people to alert them to the potential risks, but also about how to keep themselves safe. Contracts of usage are also agreed. If young people fail to meet the terms of their contract, sanctions are imposed. For example, failure to hand in a mobile telephone at night, results in a time-limited withdrawal of the device. Young people said that such sanctions are fair, as they know what they have agreed to do.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<p>There is a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager in charge of the home. He has managed the home for two years. He was the deputy manager of the home prior to this. He has the necessary skills, qualifications and experience to manage the home. He leads by example and has a positive can-do attitude. He effectively empowers the staff team. Staff feel that their views about the development of the home are important, and they are encouraged to voice ideas and initiatives. Individual staff have specific responsibilities and take the lead on driving these things forward. This makes good use of staff skills, and this ownership ensures that tasks are completed in a timely way.</p> <p>One requirement resulted from the last interim inspection of the home in August 2015. This related to the need to stabilise the staff team, as there had been a high turnover of staff. The registered manager has successfully managed this. Staff who have left the home since the last inspection have done so due to changes in their personal circumstances. The promotion of staff within the home has also helped to ensure continuity of staff for young people. The home has a number of regular bank staff, some of whom are former permanent employees in the home, so the home can call on them in the event of staffing shortfalls.</p>	

Staff receive regular supervision and appraisal. This provides staff with an opportunity to reflect on their practice and decision-making. Staff training is seen as a priority, and a range of pertinent training opportunities is available. For example, staff have received training on radicalisation and on child sexual exploitation. This ensures that staff have the necessary skills to meet the needs of young people, and they appreciate this investment in their development.

The internal and external monitoring of the home is thorough. Managers use this effectively to identify shortfalls and to ensure that any issues identified are rectified in a timely way. Young people's records are of a very good quality and chart the progress that they are making. However, following an audit of medication records, a minor error was noted and amended, but this resulted in a confusing and messy record that was difficult to follow.

Senior managers are visible and known to staff and young people. They demonstrate a good knowledge of young people and are eager to acknowledge and celebrate their success. They recently held an achievement ceremony to reward the young people. One social worker who attended commented, 'I attended a rewards ceremony, which was a really nice evening. My young person was made to feel really special for what he had achieved.' Such events help to motivate young people to achieve.

The registered manager has in place a development plan, which is subject to regular review. He demonstrates a clear desire to drive forward improvement. He has reviewed and amended a number of record formats used in the home, in order to improve the quality of these. He is forward thinking.

All professionals involved with the home comment on the excellent communication that they receive from the home. For example, a school representative commented, in feedback taken by the home, 'Working alongside staff in this home is a real pleasure. There is daily communication between school and home, which is honest and open. Young people benefit greatly from this level of communication.' A social worker also commented to the inspector, 'I have nothing bad to say about the home. It is the best home that I have worked with. Communication is brilliant. It really is outstanding.'



## 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, 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 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. Wherever 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 who 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'.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

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, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children 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 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto: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 [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](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](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2016