

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>13/10/2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC483692</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered provider</b>	<b>Roc Northwest Ltd</b>
<b>Registered provider address</b>	<b>Roc Northwest Ltd, 41 Silverdale Road, Carnforth, Lancashire LA5 0AL</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Katie Stephens</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Peter Birkby</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Marie Cordingley</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>13/10/2016</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Good</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>Good</b>

## SC483692

### Summary of findings

#### **The children's home provision is outstanding because:**

- Young people who live at this home receive an exceptionally high standard of individualised care. As a result, they make outstanding progress in many or, in some cases, all aspects of their lives.
- Young people enjoy warm and trusting relationships with staff. Young people trust staff and feel safe in their care.
- The staff team knows young people well and has a good understanding of their needs. Staff are strongly committed to young people and the quality of care that they receive.
- Young people enjoy good-quality experiences on a day-to-day basis. They are supported to take part in valued and fulfilling activities inside and outside their home.
- Staff carefully consider risks to the young people's safety and well-being. They take appropriate action to keep young people safe from harm.
- Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and are fully confident to report any concerns about the safety or well-being of the young people.
- Young people are supported to reduce their own high-risk behaviours. A demonstrable decrease in high-risk behaviours is evident and, as a result, young people are safer.
- Young people's social and emotional development is strongly supported, including setting goals and giving encouragement to achieve them.
- Young people receive their care from a consistent, well-trained and well-supported staff team.
- Community professionals consistently report high levels of satisfaction with the service.
- The home benefits from strong leadership, and an open and transparent culture within which young people are encouraged to express their views or raise concerns.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

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

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/09/2015	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p><b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b></p>	<p><b>Outstanding</b></p>
<p>Young people benefit from the support of a stable, consistent staff team. Staff know young people well and understand the things that are important to them. The manner in which young people interact and respond to staff shows that they have warm, secure relationships based on trust and respect. A young person said: 'I like them all. They just want to look after us. I could go to any one of them if I had a problem.'</p> <p>Visiting professionals are complimentary about the approach of staff and the positive relationships that they share with young people. One social worker commented that they observed a warm and nurturing approach from staff that meant that young people felt safe. Other comments from social workers included: 'I have always witnessed very good interactions. It has a real feel of a family home', 'They [the staff] really understand the young people. They take time to get to know them and understand what matters to them.'</p> <p>The registered manager and staff encourage young people to share their views and express their opinions, and take action to address them. For example, at a recent meeting, the young people requested a new computer and this was promptly arranged. When young people told the registered manager that they would like to take up cycling, he made arrangements to purchase cycles and organise cycling proficiency training. Young people take part in the recruitment of new staff by helping to set interview questions and meeting candidates on an informal basis.</p> <p>Young people are enabled to raise concerns and, when they do so, they are taken seriously. One young person had been supported by staff to raise a formal complaint. The registered manager responded in a kind and reassuring manner, thanking the young person for bringing the matter to his attention, before dealing with the issue promptly.</p> <p>An external advocate described the registered manager and staff as very proactive about advocacy, commenting that young people are encouraged to speak with external advocates on an ongoing basis. This helps young people to feel that they are listened to and that their opinions are valued.</p> <p>The registered manager and staff encourage young people to set goals and to achieve. They are passionately ambitious for the young people in their care. The walls within the home are decorated with young people's artwork, certificates of achievement and photographs.</p>	

All young people are currently engaging positively with further education or taking part in activities designed to prepare them for further education. They attend regularly and speak positively about this aspect of their lives. One young person said, 'I am really enjoying college. I like learning new things and I am making friends.' The registered manager recently arranged additional private tuition for one young person to assist him to prepare for his GCSEs. Supporting young people to achieve in this manner helps them to feel valued and increases their confidence.

All the young people started new forms of education this term. The registered manager recognised that this was a major transition in their lives and, for one young person in particular, meant them going from a small environment to a larger college environment. To assist the young people in this transition, the registered manager commissioned a private therapist to carry out some work with them. All the young people engaged positively in the work and made an animated film about coping with change. The registered manager described this as very successful and felt that it assisted the young people in developing their own coping strategies.

Young people's social and emotional development is strongly supported. They have developed positive relationships with each other and are encouraged to make positive friendships outside the home. The registered manager has recognised that one young person would benefit from specialised support in this area, and has made arrangements for this to be provided.

The registered manager and staff support young people to lead healthy, active lifestyles. One young person has recently taken up cycling and advanced swimming. He commented that he was pleased that the advanced swimming was helping him to improve his technique. He described how the staff had encouraged him to obtain all the necessary safety equipment, such as a helmet, for his cycling hobby.

There is a positive approach to supporting young people towards independence. All young people have a clear independence plan in place which is regularly reviewed and evaluated. Individual targets are set in accordance with the young person's current abilities and there is clear information about the support that they require to meet their targets. A social worker described the independence work carried out at the home as innovative and commented that a young person whom he had supported had benefited immensely from it.

Young people enjoy very positive day-to-day experiences. They take part in a variety of activities, which include snowboarding and outdoor pursuits. One young person had recently taken part in a residential outdoor pursuits trip and had been congratulated by the trip leaders on his positive contribution and behaviour. The young people recently enjoyed a holiday together, for some their first trip abroad.

The registered manager and staff take time to think about how young people can be supported to enjoy valued activities at home. They have an allotment where the

young people grow vegetables and herbs. One young person, who enjoys woodwork, has been supported by staff to make some marvellous items, including a CD rack and a storage box. He showed real pride in these and spoke enthusiastically about his planned future projects.

The young people at this home show a genuine sense of belonging and pride. One young person was keen to show the inspector a trophy that the home had recently won in an internal awards event. He said, 'We won it because we are the best!'

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>Young people feel safe living in this home. They feel that staff care about their well-being and feel able to talk about concerns or worries. One young person commented, 'You can talk to staff. They will listen and help you to sort things out.'</p> <p>The registered manager ensures 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 reduces the risk of someone with an unsuitable character being employed, therefore helps to safeguard the young people.</p> <p>Young people live in a comfortable, well-maintained environment. There are measures in place to monitor safety, which include regular health and safety audits. When issues are identified, the registered manager takes prompt action to address them. For example, some actions were identified at a recent fire safety inspection and the registered manager addressed these immediately.</p> <p>All staff are provided with training in safeguarding children and young people at the start of their employment. This training is regularly renewed to help to ensure that staff maintain their knowledge. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of safeguarding and the actions that they must take if they have any concerns that a young person is at risk of harm. Staff members said that they were fully confident to report any such concerns and were confident that the registered manager would deal with any such concerns effectively.</p> <p>Staff have a very good understanding of the risks to young people's safety and well-being and the measures required to keep them safe. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place for each young person. When risks are identified, there are clear plans in place to help to maintain their safety.</p> <p>The registered manager and staff work positively with other agencies to help to maintain the safety and well-being of young people. One young person was identified as being vulnerable to particular risks, and the registered manager had</p>	

responded by quickly involving the appropriate specialist professionals and arranging additional training, which all the staff team attended.

Incidents of young people being missing are rare at this home. On the small number of occasions that these have occurred, staff have worked proactively with other agencies such as the police to safeguard the young people involved. The work continues to minimise the risks of young people going missing in future.

Young people are supported to learn about keeping themselves safe. The registered manager recently developed a quiz for young people based on safeguarding. The quiz helped young people to understand about safeguarding and how staff would keep them safe from harm.

The young people who live at this home have experienced a notable reduction in their own high-risk behaviours. Young people use their free time wisely and return to the home at agreed times. There are currently no concerns about any of the young people's behaviours or associations outside the home.

Positive behaviour management is a strength of this home. The registered manager commented that staff focus strongly on de-escalating situations before they reach crisis point. This was supported by every staff member spoken with during the inspection. One staff member said, 'We work by encouraging and focusing on the positive, and they have all done well. Behaviour management is a strength of the home. It is always based mainly on de-escalation. Because we are such a stable team, we know the young people so well that we can see problems before they get to crisis. We know all the warning signs and we can pretty much always de-escalate.'

Incidents requiring physical intervention are minimal. On the rare occasion that they do take place, they are closely analysed by the registered manager. All those involved are encouraged to reflect and explore how a similar situation might be avoided in the future. Any young person involved is encouraged to speak with an external advocate, which helps to safeguard them against inappropriate restraint.

There is a strong focus on rewarding positive behaviour. All the young people have responded well to this approach and continue to enjoy working towards their rewards. One young person showed the inspector a gift card that he had earned by regular attendance at education. He commented that he was very pleased with the gift and said that he intended to earn many more.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>
The home is managed by a permanent registered manager, who is currently in the	



process of obtaining a suitable qualification. The registered manager reports an excellent level of support from his managers. He expresses satisfaction with the level of training and supervision provided to him.

The registered manager also advises that he is provided with excellent resources to run the home effectively. He commented that he 'could not praise the organisation enough' and gave examples, such as the resources being made available to take the young people on holiday, buy them bicycles and maintain the home to a very high standard.

The registered manager has created a culture of high aspiration and ambition for the young people. The staff team demonstrates pride in the service and a strong commitment towards the young people in their care. Young people's needs are comprehensively addressed and they make outstanding progress as a result of the care and support that they receive.

The ethos of the home is based on strong values and a focus on child-centred practice. One community professional commented, 'I have found the whole ethos of the setting and ethical approach of the staff to be above standard, to say the least. They have consistently demonstrated an ethical and dignified approach to the young people, and responded appropriately to their needs and aspirations.'

The low turnover of staff results in a stable and consistent staff team. Young people benefit from consistency, and receive their care from people who know them well and understand their needs.

The registered manager has created an open and transparent culture within which staff feel well supported and able to express their views and raise concerns. One staff member commented, 'This is the sort of place where you don't have to feel worried about saying if you have got something wrong.'

The staff team benefits from a comprehensive training programme. In addition to core mandatory training, courses are provided in line with the needs of young people who live at the home. All but two recently appointed staff members hold nationally recognised qualifications in caring for children and young people. These two staff members yet to complete the qualification are in the process of doing so. This positive approach to training helps to ensure that staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to care for young people in a safe and effective manner.

The registered manager ensures that supervision is regularly provided to all staff. This provides staff with the opportunity to discuss areas such as personal development, training or any concerns that they may have.

Staff are encouraged to share their views. Staff team meetings take place on a regular basis, within which open discussions take place about practice at the home. Satisfaction surveys are sent out to staff on a periodic basis. Following the last

survey, the registered manager took time to write personally to all staff who had taken part to respond to any suggestions that they had made.

The registered manager and staff work with external agencies in a positive and proactive manner. These effective relationships result in young people receiving well-planned and coordinated care. Community professionals speak highly of the registered manager and staff, and are complimentary about the care and support that they provide. A social worker commented, 'The home is a place where young people are highly supported and treated with respect by a very good team. Each time that I have visited, I drive away feeling positive and happy with the level of care and support that the young residents receive.'

The registered manager is able to challenge other agencies actively in circumstances when it is identified that a young person is not receiving the necessary support from them. He was able to evidence a number of examples when he had advocated for young people and ensured that the issues were addressed.

The registered manager has a good understanding of the strengths of the service and potential areas for development. He carries out a number of processes to monitor quality and safety formally across the service and takes appropriate action when issues are identified. Some aspects of the quality assurance process are directly aligned to the progress of young people and the quality of their experiences. This demonstrates that the experiences of the young people are considered when assessing how well the service is performing.

## 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 and 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 looked after children 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 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 0300 123 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, work-based 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