

# SC066428

Registered provider: Roc Northwest Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to five young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is operated by a private company.

**Inspection dates:** 19 to 20 September 2017

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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:** 7 March 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:

- Creative and dedicated staff support young people to make exceptional progress in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Young people are proud to be associated with the staff and their home.
- Relationships between staff and young people are very positive.
- Staff put considerable time and energy into helping young people to make meaningful progress in their education. This includes enthusiastically celebrating the smallest of achievements.
- Staff take time to listen to young people, and are committed to ensuring that the best possible outcomes are achieved.
- Staff ensure that the accommodation provides young people with a safe, pleasant and stimulating environment, which gives them a sense of belonging.
- Staff are knowledgeable about risks that can compromise young people's safety. This includes staff taking effective action in response to receiving information that might mean that young people are at risk of child sexual exploitation.
- Outstanding support from integrated therapeutic services helps to play a key role in improving young people's emotional health and resilience.
- Staff work proactively with partner agencies, including child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and placing authorities, to ensure that a collaborative approach is achieved, with the aim of keeping young people safe.
- The registered manager has an excellent awareness of the strengths of the staff team.
- The registered manager and the staff use research to understand how best to support young people who have a range of complex needs.
- Staff are skilled, knowledgeable and insightful in their support of young people.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The registered manager should consider reviewing whether the use of door alarms on all bedroom doors as standard practice is appropriate for all young people living in the home.

## **Recent inspection history**

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
07/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/10/2016	Full	Good
21/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
05/01/2016	Full	Good

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

### Recommendations

- Staff need the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a child is in any way at risk of harm. The registered person should ensure that skills in safeguarding are gained, refreshed and recorded in the home's workforce plan. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

As a direct result of the exceptional care that young people receive, all of them are making excellent progress from their starting points. The enthusiastic and motivated staff work together to provide young people with highly personalised care. A social worker told the inspector, 'In my opinion this young man has had excellent support from [home]. They always advocated strongly on his behalf and work well with me whilst being prepared to challenge strongly on his behalf. It is apparent that staff have built excellent relationship with the young man, who has described [home] as "my home", and that he has "14 parents [staff]".'

Staff care about young people in a warm, nurturing and friendly way. One member of staff told the inspector, 'We're like a big family.' Staff excitedly plan for events, such as young people moving on to foster care, by arranging surprises and hiding away presents. As a result, young people receive care from staff who care deeply about them and understand their needs extremely well.

Staff are imaginative and creative, with the result that young people have a homely and welcoming environment in which to live. For example, pictures of young people who lived at the home for many years are placed around the home. Young people who return to the home to visit and have tea see that staff still think about them. This shows that young people have formed strong, meaningful connections that help them to gain a sense of belonging.

Staff ensure that the voice of the young person is heard. This is achieved through informal conversations, house meetings and key-work sessions. Staff show insight into how best to get young people to open up and talk; this includes taking a young person for a drive, sitting and doing artwork, or having casual conversations while young people help to prepare tea. Young people told the inspector that they feel listened to, and that they know that staff care for them. When a young person makes a complaint, staff respond swiftly and address the issues. Staff who are committed to understanding young people's views and wishes enable young people to contribute to the care that they receive.

Staff highly value education, and are proactive in helping young people to overcome the

barriers to learning. Staff work hand in hand with the virtual head and education providers to coordinate the support that is offered to young people. This includes daily handovers, attendance at planning meetings and, where necessary, sending staff into school with the young person. As a result, young people who had a history of low attendance and poor attitudes towards learning now attend regularly, make educational progress, and are enthusiastic about their own learning and future. A social worker said, 'The young man who they support has made exceptional progress since being accommodated by [home], and has moved from being a young person that has been isolated from his community and education to a successful student who is likely to start university in the next academic year, has developed a network of friends, and has the capacity to build and maintain relationships.' An area learning advocate told the inspector, 'Communication has been excellent. Colleagues in the home have been helpful in creating links and staff who I have had contact with have spoken positively of [young person].'

Staff are diligent with regard to young people's health needs, supporting them to access primary healthcare such as their general practitioners, dentists and opticians. Staff use their strong links with the integrated therapy practitioner to ensure that young people receive tailored support to address their emotional health needs. This includes staff offering affection, having daily discussions with young people, offering praise and showing that they genuinely care. A therapist told the inspector, 'The staff work really hard; they role model positive behaviour, and are consistent in their approach. Young people have made considerable progress.'

Staff utilise research into early life trauma and attachment in order to increase their understanding and awareness of the childhood experiences of young people. Young people's emotional and physical health improves because staff have insight into their individual needs and offer excellent support.

Dedicated staff provide young people with the encouragement and motivation to succeed in life. This leads to young people making significant progress in their pathway to adulthood. For example, one young person had a part-time job over the summer period. This is a fantastic accomplishment considering the young person's starting point. When a young person is struggling with a certain aspect of their personalised independence plan, staff offer short- and long-term incentives to encourage the young person to re-engage.

Staff plan exceptionally well for new admissions to ensure that young people are able to settle quickly. For example, the registered manager visited the young person and introduced herself and other members of the team. She spent time getting to know the young person prior to them moving in. The outcome was that the young person made a seamless transition, and was in the best position to continue to make remarkable progress in respect of their educational, social and emotional development. This demonstrates the registered manager's excellent insight into the individual needs of young people, and a willingness to be flexible in order to best support young people.

Staff value young people's contact with families, encouraging young people to make use of phone calls when families live a long distance away. Staff try to make contact positive and memorable, for example by ensuring that places of interests are visited, where staff can support the parents and young people to have an enjoyable family outing. This

support allows young people to sustain meaningful relationships with people who are important to them.

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

Safeguarding and risk management are the foundation of good practice for every member of staff. Staff have a strong understanding of risk, and work tirelessly to ensure that potential risks for young people are managed effectively. Young people told the inspector that they felt safe. One young person said, 'I definitely feel safe. If I didn't, I would speak to [registered manager] or staff and I know they would help me.'

Young people become increasingly safe because staff have excellent insight into their individual risk profiles. Staff regularly review risk assessments in order to consider whether their actions remain right, and to reflect on the progress made by the young person. Staff recognise the importance of this live document in keeping young people safe.

Intuitive staff use creative ways to address young people's inappropriate behaviours. Staff use verbal praise and rewards, such as a meal out, to promote positive behaviour. A picture board for one young person allows him to see what needs to be done on each day in order for him to receive his treat. This structure around his day allows him to keep focused on tasks. When a young person displays inappropriate behaviour, staff use reflective therapeutic interviews to support the young person to reflect on and learn from their actions. A social worker told the inspector, 'Since being placed here, [young person] has settled very well and from the off took to the home's rules and boundaries. The staff really got the measure of [young person] very quickly and worked with him to make a plan that suited him and that he would be able to stick to. He has had opportunities to go on holiday, take part in activities and has flourished because of this.' The staff's approach to behaviour management has meant that young people have reduced their challenging behaviour, and have instead made safe decisions about their welfare.

Because of their strong relationships with staff, young people make the decision not to go missing. However, staff remain vigilant to the likelihood of such incidents occurring. Staff have worked with the police to implement trigger plans in order to ensure that a coordinated approach to dealing with such incidents is in place.

Intensive therapeutic support enables those young people who are identified as being vulnerable to develop the emotional resilience to become stronger individuals. Staff are sensitive to potential triggers that may result in the deterioration of a young person's emotional state, and ensure that the required support is in place. Strong relationships mean that young people seek support from staff when they are struggling and in need of extra help. For example, staff have completed research-based training on the sexual identity of young people, and have assisted young people with their understanding around their identity. This has reduced the risk of emotional distress, and has developed even stronger bonds between the staff and the young people

Staff are alert to young people's vulnerability to exploitation. Staff actively review this risk to ensure that clear plans are in place to keep young people safe. Young people who

were at significant risk at the start of their placements present little to no risk now. Quality therapeutic support, coupled with the staff's desire to keep all young people safe, has resulted in young people successfully moving forward with their lives and onto the next stage of their journey to adulthood successfully.

Staff recognise the importance of providing young people with the knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe. For example, staff have used online resources and videos to educate young people about the risk of exploitation. One staff member was unsure about the role of the designated safeguarding officer and what action they should take if young people showed an interest in extremism. This was discussed with the registered manager and a recommendation was made to improve practice in this area.

Staff are not risk averse, and recognise that young people need to be afforded age-appropriate opportunities to take responsibility for their own safety. For example, young people are allowed increased free time, with restrictions and monitoring gradually being reduced as they demonstrate the skills and abilities to keep themselves safe.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The registered manager has been in post since March 2014, and is qualified to diploma level 5 in leadership and management of care services. The majority of staff have completed the diploma level 3 in residential childcare, or the equivalent. All of the remaining staff will have achieved this qualification within the next 12 months.

The registered manager and the staff demonstrate a strong understanding of young people's childhood journeys. This knowledge has helped staff to identify and overcome the barriers to young people making progress in respect of their educational, emotional and social development. As a result, staff are responsive to the individual needs of young people, and offer tailored support to ensure that young people are able to make and sustain outstanding progress across the full range of development areas, compared with their starting points.

The staff team mirrors the registered manager's child-focused and enthusiastic approach. Staff consistently told the inspector that the registered manager is supportive, helpful and encouraging of their development and progress.

The registered manager leads a highly skilled and experienced staff team that presents the natural ability to provide high-quality care for young people. Staff value the reflective supervisions and purposeful team meetings, and say that the training offered by the provider is comprehensive, interesting and really helps them to understand how to support young people to make progress and keep safe, in line with the statement of purpose. The registered manager's awareness of the strengths of her staff team ensures that young people experience a consistently high standard of care from staff who are motivated and well trained.

New staff benefit from a well-planned induction, which helps to maintain a consistent level of care for young people. This includes training in child protection, therapeutic care and behaviour management, as well as opportunities to shadow experienced staff, and benefit from more frequent supervision.

Communication is at the heart of the manager's practice, resulting in a shared

understanding and approach with regard to meeting the needs of the young people. The registered manager has developed highly effective relationships with partner agencies, including the police, education providers and placing authorities. This collaborative approach has negated the need for the registered manager to challenge partner agencies to date.

The registered manager takes positive steps to gather the views of parents, young people, social workers and other professionals about the quality of care provided by the home. Effective action is taken in response to these, and to other comments

## **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:** SC066428

**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:** Janice Jardine

## Inspector

Elaine Clare: social care inspector

Jessica Forshaw: social care inspector (shadow)

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