

2571902

Registered provider: ROC Family Support 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. It provides care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2022.

There were three children living at the home at the time of this inspection. The inspector spoke to two of the children during the inspection.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 January 2024

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: 14 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/02/2023	Full	Good
07/09/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff understand children's past experiences and adopt a therapeutic approach to support them. This helps children to develop secure relationships with the adults caring for them. Children said that they can identify a staff member they trust to help them.

When children move into the home, this is managed sensitively and with care. The registered manager considers the new child's needs and their compatibility with the other children who live in the home. Before moving in, the child has visits and receives information about the home, such as a children's guide. This helps to reduce anxiety for the child and the trauma a move can bring. Additionally, this sets a good starting point for relationships to develop with children and staff.

Most children make good progress with their education. For some children, their progress fluctuates. Small steps and achievements are recognised and celebrated for the children. The staff work in partnership with other professionals in the children's network to explore strategies to help children engage in education. However, when a child is not attending an educational provision, staff do not consistently promote and record informal educational activities. This is a missed opportunity to track all the child's educational achievements.

Staff support children to improve their health. Children's knowledge of their own diagnosis and the nature of their health condition increases. This helps them to meet their own health needs. For one child, this has helped them to engage with specialist services. Additionally, this is significant for this child, as their unmet health needs could have life-limiting consequences for them.

When children initiate conversations about their past trauma and experiences, staff respond with care and nurture. One example includes joined-up work with the child's social worker to explore life-story work. The staff team is committed to help the children understand their journey. Staff sensitively support children to explore their past to help them make sense of their experiences.

Children's care plans are personalised and reflect their individuality. Staff ensure that children have access to a range of activities that are personal and specific to their needs and interests, such as holidays and day trips. This helps children to develop social skills. Staff respect the individuality of each child, especially as children living at the home have limited shared interests with each other.

Children have memory books that help them to capture important events and experiences. Children are freely able to access and add to these themselves. This gives children ownership and shows that staff value their experiences.

Children know how to make a complaint. Children's views are listened to and help to influence decisions in the home, for example the planning for a games room and snug area. The children's bedrooms are personalised to their own tastes, which helps give them a sense of permanence.

Staff help children to spend time with people who are important to them, including family members who do not live locally. However, two parents said that the communication from staff is not always consistent.

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

Children's individual risk assessments are thorough and detailed. They are reviewed regularly and provide a rationale when changes are made. This helps staff to understand the children's vulnerabilities and how to respond to new risks. Additionally, this helps the registered manager to monitor and respond swiftly if risks increase.

Children benefit from discussions with staff. The focus is on providing children with information and advice about risks that they may face. Children learn skills to keep themselves safer. Risks such as sexual health, vaping, substance misuse and internet safety are explored using sensitive and non-blaming language. Staff have benefited from training on the use of sensitive language, which is reflected in children's records. This will benefit children's emotional well-being if they read their information now or in the future.

Staff follow safeguarding procedures. The registered manager and senior leadership team take allegations seriously. A coordinated response with safeguarding professionals ensures that a thorough investigation takes place. Children are given the opportunity to share their views with staff and their social worker.

Children rarely go missing from home. However, if they do, staff understand the procedures that they have to follow. A well-coordinated response means children return to the home swiftly, which ensures the child's safety. Staff sensitively welcome children home.

Staff promote positive behaviour in the home. Some children thrive on incentives, which give them a sense of pride. However, the manager does not consistently review and amend the incentives used to motivate children.

The children have bedroom door alarms to monitor when they enter or leave their bedroom. Two children said they were annoyed by the sound of the door alarms. The registered manager does not regularly review whether this level of monitoring is necessary for each child. This means that the measure may be in place unnecessarily and compromises the homely environment.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is currently on planned time away from the home. An acting manager was employed before the registered manager's leave commenced. This ensured a smooth transition and handover. Additionally, children were introduced to the new manager so that they were familiar with the adults caring for them.

There has been an increase in staff recruitment. Safer recruitment procedures are followed, which helps to ensure safe adults are caring for the children.

The senior leadership team is ambitious for all the children at the home. It is committed to develop strategies that promote staff retention and opportunities for children. Some staff have taken advantage of the aspiring management programme to help develop their skills. This helps to ensure that staff are suitably skilled to safeguard and improve children's outcomes.

Staff receive regular practice-related supervision to identify areas of challenge and to help improve staff practice. Staff have access to consultations with a psychologist to help them understand and respond to children's presenting behaviour. In one example, this has assisted in referrals to specialist health agencies to support the child.

The manager uses monitoring systems effectively to review children's progress. This identifies any gaps in children's plans or records so that staff can address these shortfalls. This helps to ensure that staff have the most up-to-date information to meet children's needs.

Staff work collaboratively with professionals in the children's network. Feedback from professionals is very positive, and there is a shared understanding of children's needs. This helps children to experience a consistent response from adults who can help them.

The senior leadership team acknowledges that there are some tensions between some staff members and children. This can negatively impact on the harmony of the home. The senior leadership team is aware of the children's views and has a plan in place to resolve any issues.

What does the children’s home need to do to improve? Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person must take to meet The Care Standards Act 2000, The Children’s Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the ‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’. The registered person must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children. (Regulation 24(1) (a))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person should ensure that the use of door alarms is reviewed and considered against children’s individual needs.</p>	<p>17 April 2024</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should identify and consult with others, such as parents and relatives, who must play a part in their children’s lives and engage with those relevant people proactively. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 12, paragraph 2.7)
- The registered person should ensure that the staff encourage enthusiasm for positive behaviour using positive behaviour strategies. In particular, strategies to encourage positive behaviour should be reviewed and amended, in line with the children’s individual needs. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 39, paragraph 8.13)
- The registered person should ensure that when children are not participating in education, the child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 28, paragraph 5.15)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: 2571902

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: ROC Family Support Ltd

Registered provider address: Hope House, Burnhope, Newton Aycliffe, Durham
DL5 7ER

Responsible individual: Laura Roberts

Registered manager: Kaylie Mullin

Inspector

Cat Makel, Social Care Inspector

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