

1258769

ROC Northwest

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a number of homes operated by a private organisation. The home provides care and accommodation for up to 10 children with disabilities or behavioural needs. Accommodation is provided across five units on the site. However, at the time of this inspection, only one unit was in operation.

The home has been without a registered manager since August 2020. A new manager has been appointed but has not yet completed registration with Ofsted.

Ofsted last visited this home on 27 February 2020, when it carried out an interim inspection.

Inspection date: 18 March 2021

This monitoring visit

This visit was conducted in response to information received, which indicated potential breaches of regulation. The visit was carried out on site with some remote work taking place to review documents.

There are three children living at the home, who have all moved there recently. The children's moves into the home were well planned. Managers and staff took time to get to know the children and understand their needs. Social workers and parents feel that children were well supported throughout their transition and that this helped them to settle.

Social workers and parents feel that children have made good progress, particularly in establishing positive routines and engaging in education. Individual care plans are in place for each child and provide staff with guidance about how to meet children's needs. However, in one example, care planning in relation to a child's 'as and when required' medication lacked clarity. This means that the child is at risk of not receiving her medication when she needs it.

Staff are able to describe children's individual methods of communication and explain how they support children to make choices. However, some records demonstrate that managers and staff do not always seek or respond to children's views, wishes or feelings. For example, the views of one child were not explored following a search of her bedroom. In addition, children's debriefs following incidents, such as physical restraints, are often used to remind children of expectations about their behaviour, rather than to discuss the children's feelings.

Language in records of significant incidents raise concerns about managers' and staff's understanding of children's behaviours. There are frequent references to 'unacceptable' and 'silly' behaviours, which indicate a lack of insight about how a child's experiences and emotions can impact them. When one child expressed a confused view about a sensitive matter, the record states that she was told that this had been explained to her previously and therefore 'this conversation was not appropriate to be having'. Responding to a child in this manner does not support the child's emotional needs and does not support the development of positive relationships.

Concerns were identified about the approach to children's behaviours and the use of consequences as a form of discipline. For example, one record indicated that a child had lost time on his laptop due to an incident that should not have led to a negative consequence. This child was also told he must 'improve his behaviour' to earn a zoom call with a family member. In discussion, managers advised that decisions to limit this child's family contact would only be based on risk management; however, records did not support this.

Not all records of physical interventions demonstrate that the measures were necessary. Some records fail to reflect that staff have made appropriate efforts to de-escalate situations in other ways prior to a physical intervention taking place.

Risk management plans are in place. These are generally well detailed and contain agreed safeguarding strategies. However, on one occasion, staff failed to take appropriate action to safeguard a child and ensure that they were not harmed following a serious incident.

Shortfalls were identified in relation to the monitoring of significant events. The inspectors reviewed the records of a number of incidents and identified various concerns, as described within this report. These concerns had not been identified by managers during their own internal monitoring. Failure to monitor effectively means that indications of poor or unsafe practice are not consistently identified or addressed and as such, children are not sufficiently protected from harm.

The home has been without a registered manager since August 2020. In addition, there are concerns regarding the provider's failure to ensure that their registration

with Ofsted is correct and accurately described in the home's statement of purpose. Discussions are ongoing with the provider about this matter.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/02/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/04/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
16/01/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/10/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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 children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>develop positive relationships with them;</p> <p>engage with them; and</p> <p>take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>help each child to express views, wishes and feelings;</p> <p>help each child to understand how the child's privacy will be respected and the circumstances when it may have to be limited. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(v))</p>	07 May 2021
<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.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans;</p>	07 May 2021

<p>help each child to develop socially aware behaviour;</p> <p>communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding;</p> <p>understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v)(ix))</p> <p>This relates to the need to take into account children's level of understanding when sharing expectations about their behaviours. This also relates to the need to ensure that staff have appropriate skills and knowledge about children's behaviours and why they may occur.</p>	
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vi)(b))</p>	07 May 2021
<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 promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each</p>	26 April 2021

<p>child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(f)(h))</p> <p>This relates to the need to ensure that monitoring is effective so that poor or unsafe practice is identified and addressed.</p>	
<p>No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child.</p> <p>The following measures may not be used to discipline any child—</p> <p>any restriction, other than one imposed by a court or in accordance with regulation 22 (contact and access to communications), on—</p> <p>a child's contact with parents, relatives or friends. (Regulation 19 (1) (2)(c)(i))</p>	07 May 2021
<p>Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing—</p> <p>injury to any person (including the child);</p> <p>serious damage to the property of any person (including the child).</p> <p>Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b) (2))</p>	07 May 2021
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1))</p> <p>This relates to the need to ensure that there is guidance in place in relation to children's 'as and when required' medications, which includes clear information about when these should be administered.</p>	07 May 2021

*This requirement is subject to a compliance notice.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1258769

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: ROC Northwest

Registered provider address: ROC Northwest, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: David Phipps

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Marie Cordingley, Social Care Inspector

Mrs Rachel Springford, Social Care Inspector

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