

2571902

Registered provider: Roc Family Support Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two children who may have emotional and/or social difficulties.

The manager is suitably qualified, and registered with Ofsted in March 2020 when the home opened.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 28 and 29 September 2020, to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 September 2021

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 outstanding

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 28 to 29 September 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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Not previously inspected		
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Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children's experience of living in this home is good. This results in children making progress in various areas of their lives, for example their education, health and emotional well-being.

Children's care is coordinated effectively, and their progress is consistently reviewed. The staff and relevant professionals work together to understand the children's needs and implement support and care, which makes a positive difference to children's lives.

Children said that they like living in the home so much that they want to stay as long as possible. The children have good relationships with staff, and this helps them to talk about their lives and resolve problems. The staff use a nurturing approach and manage children's significant events with respect and sensitivity. This helps children to build trusting relationships and feel valued.

Children move into the home in a planned and careful way, taking into account COVID-19 restrictions. The manager helps children to prepare for their move by providing them with information about the home and the staff who work there. Where possible, the children visit the home before they move in. Children's plans are quickly formulated, and risks are well understood. This means that children are supported to settle in with clear plans on how the staff will help them make progress.

Children have access to a wide range of activities which promote their social skills and self-confidence. Staff join in the activities and help children to build positive memories of their experiences, which have included going to a spa, a theme park, restaurants and surfing. Children have a weekly activity planner which is based on their individual preferences and interests. This helps children to be happy and experience new opportunities.

Children are making excellent progress in their education. Staff give children encouragement and tailored support to promote educational attainment. This has led to children returning to education after several months of absence. Furthermore, the children have gained GCSEs and are pursuing further education courses. This helps children to value education and enhances their future outcomes.

Children are supported to be healthy, both physically and emotionally. The staff help the children to develop new routines and behaviours that promote healthy living. Children receive advice about good self-care on topics such as sexual health, smoking and sleep patterns. This helps the children to learn how to take care of themselves. Staff also support the children to attend routine appointments, for example with the GP or dentist. This is particularly beneficial for children who have not accessed these health services prior to moving into the home.

The home is well maintained and personalised with photographs of the children on display. Children choose how their bedrooms are decorated, including the design and furnishings. There is good indoor and outdoor communal space. The manager and staff help the children to feel at home, and encourage a calm and friendly atmosphere. This leads to the children feeling confident about inviting their family and friends to visit the home. In one example, a child had a birthday party with 10 guests. This helps children to develop a sense of belonging and enjoyment in their home.

Children are supported to keep in contact with their family and friends, including when they live some distance away. The manager and staff advocate for the children and seek further advice if there are worries about children having family time. Where appropriate, children enjoy sleepovers with friends. This helps children to develop and maintain positive relationships with important people in their lives.

People who know the children well spoke positively about the progress that the children have made. One person said, 'It was either sink or swim, and [child] swam. There is no doubt that this is due to the care and support they received from staff. [Child] has made amazing progress.'

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

Children said that they feel safe. The risks to them have reduced. The manager and staff have a good understanding of children's vulnerabilities and the strategies that are used to protect children from danger. Risk assessments are regularly analysed by the manager. When there are concerns about a child's safety, the manager consults with the child's placing authority so that appropriate action is taken to protect the child.

Children's views are valued. The manager and staff encourage children to actively participate in decision-making. Through forums such as children's meetings, and through informal and formal feedback, children share their ideas and make requests. Some children are more involved in their care planning and attend formal meetings, when previously they would refuse. This practice empowers children to influence their own lives.

The frequency of children going missing from the home has reduced. If children do go missing, staff know the procedure to follow and take effective action to try to locate the child. They search the area and contact relevant professionals to provide help. Staff gather information about where children spend their time and who they are with. They use this information to reduce the missing-from-home incidents, which helps children to become increasingly safe.

Serious incidents involving children are rare, this is because behaviour is well managed by staff. During the past 12 months, there has been one incident involving a physical restraint. Staff provide children with regular praise and incentives. The staff help the children to understand the rules of the home and the expectations

when they are in the community. This means that children's behaviour is generally settled.

Children receive help to develop their life skills, so that they are prepared for their future. Through regular practical activities, children gain confidence in their ability to carry out tasks like managing money, attending appointments with professionals and travelling on public transport. These opportunities help children to prepare for adulthood.

The provider has started working with a therapeutic service which offers individual one-to-one sessions for children and support to staff. It is too early to evaluate its effectiveness; however, initial indications suggest that the staff are finding it beneficial.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is managed effectively by a permanent, suitably experienced manager. She is supported by senior staff and the organisation's leadership team. Together, they focus on ensuring high standards of care for children, which promotes positive outcomes for children.

The manager has strong leadership skills. She is methodical in her approach, and solution focused. She develops good relationships with the children, striking a balance between spending quality time with them and managing the home.

The manager is innovative and actively looks for ways to improve the service. Through effective monitoring systems, she has an excellent knowledge of the home and staff strengths and areas of development of the home and the staff. She follows a comprehensive development plan which demonstrates the improvements made and where more work is necessary.

Staff receive regular, reflective supervision. Sessions are thorough and used to enhance safeguarding practice, staff learning and development. The manager is confident about challenging issues regarding staff performance. The manager carries out observations of staff practice. Where shortfalls are identified, these are promptly addressed. This results in improvements in the care children receive.

Staff feel valued and well supported. They spoke highly of the management's approach and senior leaders in the organisation. Staff said that they feel confident about raising issues, and trust that their views are taken into account. All staff said that they like working in the organisation and one staff member also said, 'The director knows everyone's name'.

The manager ensures that the home's record-keeping is excellent. Case records reflect children's everyday lives and experiences. The case records reflect children's progress and clearly link to the plans for their future. Special memories are captured in photographs and keepsakes are treasured. This means that children's records are thorough and meaningful for the children in the future.

The manager and staff have very good relationships with partner agencies and they regularly share information about the children. Feedback from professionals is positive. One social worker said, 'I have excellent working relationships with staff. The manager is quick to resolve any issues. [Child] has made remarkable progress.'

There have been some recent staff changes due to sickness and annual leave. This naturally affects the consistency of care provided for the children. Therefore, to minimise the impact, the provider employs a small group of relief staff from within the organisation. They read children's records prior to being on shift, and are familiar with procedures. This ensures that staff are prepared for meeting the children's needs.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should, in the interests of the majority of children looked after to maintain contact with their families and friends, ensure that all forms of contact are considered, promoted and facilitated for each child, including letters. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 11.14)
- The responsible individual should ensure that all records of the manager's supervision are legible. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: Roc Family Support Ltd, Hope House, Burnhope, Newton Aycliffe, Durham DL5 7ER

Responsible individual: Sharon Nelson

Registered manager: Laura Roberts

Inspector

Catherine Heron, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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