

SC396721

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company and is registered for one young person. The home provides care for a young person who has experienced adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and presenting complex behaviours.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since November 2012, and has extensive knowledge and experience.

Visit dates: 19 to 20 October 2020

Previous inspection date: 10 December 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Outstanding

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

Since the last monitoring visit, in June 2020, one child has moved out of the home and a new child has moved in. Despite these moves occurring during the COVID-19 pandemic, managers and staff have worked closely with children's social workers to ensure that children's moves have been well planned. As a result, children have experienced successful moves. The new child has quickly developed a trusting relationship with the staff and is beginning to make good progress.

Staff encourage the child to try new activities and to maintain existing interests. The child regularly goes horse riding and is raising funds for charity by taking part in a 'bake-off'. This has had a positive impact on her physical health and her emotional well-being.

The manager and staff work closely with the organisation's clinical team. As a result of this partnership, staff are able to seek advice from the clinical team and use this help to respond appropriately to the child's complex needs. Staff encourage the child to reflect and develop strategies to manage her feelings safely. Therefore, the child's emotional health and mental health are well supported.

Staff work alongside the child's teachers to support her learning. Staff will regularly take up opportunities to support the child's reading. This extra support is helping to build up the child's confidence in her own abilities. The child told the inspector that staff talk with her about what she can achieve, and that for the first time she is thinking about being able to have a job and to buy a house and a car.

Overall, the home is a homely environment for the child to live in. However, the back garden looks neglected. An ornamental brick structure is covered in weeds and the garden chairs are tired looking and worn. The garden is not an inviting place for the child to spend time in.

The safety of children

Detailed risk assessments and behaviour management plans give staff very clear guidance on how to keep the child safe. This includes strategies to manage and de-escalate the child's complex and challenging behaviours, and to manage risks in the environment including risks from COVID-19.

On the one occasion that the child attempted to go missing from the home, staff followed the child's missing-from-home protocol. They kept close to the child to tell her that they care about her and want her to be safe. Staff then used their extremely positive relationships with the child to educate her about alternative ways

of handling difficult emotions. Because of the staff's responsive approach to providing care, the risks to the child from going missing are greatly reduced.

All staff have completed mandatory training to keep young people safe. This includes receiving training in first aid, child sexual exploitation and 'Prevent' duty.

Staff have worked closely with the child's social worker to ensure that the child can stay in touch with her family.

Leaders and managers

On 12 June 2020, a monitoring visit was carried out in response to information received by Ofsted about the home. The registered manager has worked hard to address the shortfalls identified at the monitoring visit. The inspector found that the requirements made at the monitoring visit have all been met.

Feedback from professionals was positive. They said that the manager and staff work with the child therapeutically and embed rules and boundaries so that the child experiences a stable and settled home environment.

The manager's understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development is greatly enhanced by the quality and detail of audits undertaken by the independent visitor. This has contributed to the manager's timely completion of the six-monthly quality of care review. In completing the review, the manager has utilised feedback from children and placing authorities. The manager has then set ambitious targets to improve the quality of care for the child.

Staff receive good-quality monthly supervision and an annual appraisal. Staff feel well supported by the manager and are passionate about their work with children.

Staff have not been able to receive face-to-face training since restrictions were imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these restrictions, the manager has ensured that staff have been able to complete relevant online training to help them to meet the child's needs.

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

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC396721

Registered provider: Reflexion Care Group Limited

Registered provider address: Reflexion Care Group Ltd, Black Birches, Hadnall, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY4 3DH

Responsible individual: Amanda Clarke

Registered manager: Claire Peate

Inspector

Karen Gillingwater, Social Care Inspector

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