

SC474782

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home is registered for two young people who have social and/or emotional difficulties. At the time of this quality assurance visit, one young person is living in the home. The young person has lived in the home for two years.

The registered manager has been in post for two years and has a level 5 diploma in leadership and management.

Visit dates: 24 to 25 September 2020

Previous inspection date: 28 November 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Requires improvement to be good

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

The young person is in the final stages of preparing to move into her own independent accommodation. Staff have been instrumental in helping the young person to be ready for her move. Staff have used the last few months to help the young person to develop her independent living skills. As a result, the young person is excited about her future.

The young person has physically and emotionally thrived because of the staff's child-centred approach. The relationship between the young person and the staff is excellent and has enabled the young person to develop a sense of security and belonging, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The young person told the inspector of the many fun memories she will take with her from her time at the home.

Staff have continued, despite the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, to work with the company's therapist and mental health professionals to ensure that the young person's emotional health needs are met. Staff have encouraged her to cook healthy meals and, during the period of national lockdown, they have together enjoyed activities from walks in the countryside to playing badminton in the garden.

The manager has worked with the virtual school headteacher to ensure that the young person has access to online tuition while trying to secure her an education and/or training placement. The young person's social worker told the inspector that she does not think there is any way that the manager can improve the quality of care for the young person.

The safety of children

Staff know the young person's risks exceptionally well. When the young person displays risk-taking behaviour, staff follow well-informed risk assessments that tell them what to do. As a result, the young person no longer goes missing from the home and feels safe.

Staff are highly skilled at de-escalating the young person's complex behaviour. Consequently, staff only use restraint as a last resort to keep the young person safe. After an incident of restraint, staff talk to the young person and swiftly repair their relationship. However, on one occasion managers did not ensure that staff were debriefed by an independent person. This is a missed opportunity to review staff practice.

Staff educate the young person about online safety. They will use their day-to-day discussions and planned meetings to talk through the risks. This approach means

that the young person is now able to recognise danger and is able to make safe decisions.

Leaders and managers

The manager has ensured that requirements from the last inspection have been met. A system is now in place to ensure that when less familiar staff work at the home they read the young person's risk assessments. The location risk assessment is now kept up to date. An accurate rota of staff working in the home is now in place, and the garden is now clear of brambles and thorny plants.

The manager ensures that staff receive regular good-quality supervision and an annual appraisal. During staff supervision, the manager addresses safeguarding issues and the young person's needs and regularly reviews staff development. When the manager has concerns about practice, she will challenge staff. Staff said that the manager is very supportive and that she is an effective leader.

The manager is a strong advocate for the young person. For example, despite all the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, the manager has continued to work with agencies including social workers, mental health professionals and accommodation providers to ensure that support will be in place for the young person when she moves into her new independent accommodation.

Staff have a very clear sense of the value of the service that they provide for the young person in their care. They invest in their learning and as a result are knowledgeable about the risks that the young person can face.

The manager has completed a quality of care review, which includes an evaluation of feedback from the young person and from professionals. However, the manager has not set ambitious targets. This means that an opportunity has been lost to further improve the quality of care in the home.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- Any Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending

practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC474782

Registered provider: Reflexion Care Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Gary Johnson

Registered manager: Katie Pearce

Inspector

Karen Gillingwater, Social Care Inspector

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