

# 1213416

Registered provider: Reflexion Care Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This privately owned home is registered for two children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural and/or learning difficulties. Education and therapeutic services are part of this home's statement of purpose.

**Inspection dates:** 30 January to 31 January 2018

**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 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people thrive and mature because staff provide high levels of nurture and good standards of care.
- Parents and social workers rate young people's care highly. They are confident about young people's safety. One parent's comments include, 'When she is

upset then I know the staff will give her a hug.'

- Young people make good progress and identify improvements in their behaviour.
- Young people feel stable. This means they no longer go missing.
- Young people engage in education and benefit from a range of activities.
- Staff are skilled in maintaining trusting relationships with young people. This enables young people to express their emotions and engage in therapy.
- Leadership is strong.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Retention of staff is now required to ensure good continuity of care for young people.
- Information about young people must be kept securely.
- The home's location risk assessment needs further detail and should include practical guidance for staff.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/07/2016	Full	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
Case records must be kept securely in the children’s home during the period when the child to whom the case records relate is accommodated there. (Regulation 36 (2)(c))	30/03/2018

### Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 42, paragraph 9.5)  
This is with particular reference to improving the home’s location risk assessment. To include practical guidance about access to an adjacent farm, open fields and the unlit and uneven access road to the home.
- The registered person should plan staffing levels to ensure that they meet the needs of children and can respond flexibly to unexpected events or opportunities. Staffing structures should promote continuity of care from the child’s perspective. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 54, paragraph 10.15)

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

One young person has successfully moved on from the home after a long-term placement. This young person was kept safe despite a history (before her admission to the home) of going missing and being at risk of child sexual exploitation, significant self-injurious behaviours and high levels of aggression towards staff. She experienced trusting and positive relationships and her comments to staff include, ‘Thank you for never giving up on me and for having faith in me.’

Managers and staff have shown significant commitment to another young person who was unable to return to the home due to the risk that he posed to others and his behaviour in the local community. Staff have gone above and beyond to fulfil their duty of care while the placing authority endeavoured to find an alternative placement. The young person presented significant risks and a challenge to the staff team. However, staff were committed to maintaining the relationships that they had made with the

young person and offered him essential consistency and continuity during this period of transition.

Young people currently living at the home have settled quickly and get on well due to effective compatibility assessments and staff who are skilled in building relationships. Young people make good progress. These meaningful relationships help young people build trust, experience security and engage in therapy. These outcomes positively impact on young people's emotional resilience and sense of self-worth.

The impact of staff support is quickly evident. For example, over a period of only a few months, one young person no longer goes missing from care and is protected from child sexual exploitation. Both young people have a strong sense of achievement as they now engage with education.

Consultation with, and the participation of, young people is a clear strength. Young people value their relationships with staff. They think very highly of their key workers and grow in confidence as staff provide high-quality care and sensitive emotional support.

House meetings help young people to express their views, evaluate their week and set out plans for the week ahead. They also provide young people with opportunities to contribute to the running of the home. Young people receive a quick response to their ideas, which encourages them. Good oversight by the manager includes a written response after each young people's meeting and includes lots of positive reinforcement for the young people's efforts and plans to implement their ideas.

Young people live in harmony and there are no concerns about bullying. Young people's profiles are closely assessed to promote good compatibility. Good discussion with young people about new young people coming to the home allays their anxieties when young people move in.

Young people grow in confidence. Their behaviour improves and they try a range of new experiences. One young person values the trust that she has earned and now enjoys independent time at college and having her own phone. Another young person proudly displays the photos of a trip to a 'Strictly Come Dancing' show as part of her reward for positive behaviour. Her next chosen reward, to attend a West End show, is a major incentive to improve her behaviour further and get up on time for school.

Staff support helps young people re-engage with education. One older young person is now focused on learning and is making plans for further education and employment opportunities. The other young person takes pride in her new school uniform and now attends school on a full-time basis. She is very proud of the points that she earns and her parent is immensely pleased that she now reads with staff at the home.

Young people experience good support to develop their independence skills. One young person budgets for and cooks her own meals and has clear plans for her future. Good staff support and partnership working with the young person's placing authority reassure

the young person. A greater sense of safety helps the young person focus on new opportunities and she no longer returns to areas where she has previously experienced significant harm.

Staff have good insight into the backgrounds of young people and they are instrumental in making and improving relationships between young people and their family members. Young people benefit from safe and appropriate contact with their families.

Health plans set out young people's medical needs and clear guidance for staff to follow. Young people attend all routine health appointments. Routines in the home promote healthy eating and a range of physical activities to promote good health. One young person now has the confidence to attend doctors' appointments and is taking medication because of the support that they receive from staff. This support also helps the young person to better manage their personal hygiene and grow in self-esteem.

Older young people have embraced invaluable work around sexual health both in terms of relationships and the importance of regular check-ups. Staff are proactive and refer young people to drug support agencies if required.

Staff make sure that young people's emotional and mental health is a top priority. Both young people engage in and benefit from therapy, which is provided as part of the placement package offered by this provider.

Young people live in a comfortable and well-presented physical environment. Communal areas are homely with good decoration and furnishings. Pictures, photos, soft furnishings and ornaments bring a warm and homely ambience to the house. Young people are extremely appreciative of their bedrooms. They enjoy their own personal space and have an array of pictures and personal possessions which give them a firm sense of belonging.

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

Young people feel safe and cared for. Their needs are set out and met via a comprehensive and regularly reviewed care planning framework. They thrive because of effective care planning, risk assessment, behaviour management and education support.

Young people are looked after by staff who receive a range of safeguarding training. Staff work effectively with social workers and safeguarding agencies. Concerns are quickly identified and referrals to safeguarding agencies are prompt.

Robust risk assessments clearly identify the risks presented to (and by) young people. They are protected with clear missing from care protocols, which are drawn up after consultation with the local police. Missing from care episodes are few and quickly addressed because staff understand the need for close supervision and prompt referral to safeguarding agencies. Staff search for young people and follow them if they leave. They are quickly located and return to the home safe and well due to good partnership working with the police.

Young people's safety is also promoted with clear boundaries about the use of the internet. Young people are not allowed smart mobile phones and all internet use is supervised by staff. The manager and staff work with young people to agree a good balance between young people's safety and their growing need for independence and trust. Young people understand the reasons for these boundaries and become increasingly aware of the risks of grooming and the links to child sexual exploitation.

Risk management is robust and provides staff with clear strategies for managing young people's well-being. Staff's knowledge and consistent care have significantly contributed to one young person's ability to better manage her self-injurious behaviours. Another young person safely took part in an outdoor activity programme. Staff are vigilant and effective in ensuring that risk and behaviour management plans are quickly reviewed and updated in order to respond to changes in circumstances or escalating behaviours.

There are no concerns about young people's exposure to radicalisation. However, training equips staff with the knowledge that they need to identify and report concerns should they arise.

Effective behaviour management training means that staff use a range of strategies to support and improve young people's behaviour. Behaviour management plans give staff detailed guidance about the triggers for young people's behaviour and individualised behaviour management strategies. Timely interventions and sensitive discussions help young people to understand their behaviour and explore more positive ways to express their feelings and anxieties. Messages and boundaries are clearly communicated. Young people fully understand how staff will continue to keep them safe. The strong emphasis on rewarding positive behaviours helps young people grow in confidence and enjoy improved self-esteem.

Some young people have required physical intervention to help them and others to remain safe. Rigorous monitoring of such incidents ensures that staff practice is effective and that young people can express their views about their behaviour and the measures used by staff. This reflective approach to behaviour management is instrumental to ensuring that physical intervention is only used as a last resort and the manager continuously reviews staff practice.

The home's location risk assessment has been updated in light of events relating to one specific young person who has since left the home. The rural location of the home is considered, including good liaison with emergency services and consideration of their response times. However, the risk assessment includes little practical information about the risks should young people leave the home. They may access open countryside, have access to farm machinery and the road to the home is unlit and very uneven. Practical measures to address these risks would improve the robustness of the location risk assessment.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The registered manager has recently left the home. A new manager is in post and is applying to register. Effective handover arrangements have led to a smooth transition and leadership remains strong.

Managers and staff have skills and training to meet the complex needs of young people, as set out in the home's statement of purpose.

The registered manager, the new manager and staff show unquestionable commitment to young people. They access information prior to placements being agreed. Compatibility assessments are carried out to assess individual young people's needs and the potential impact on other young people living in the home.

Sensitive and child-focused transition planning means that young people leave and arrive at the home with good support from staff. Young people move on positively from the home because the managers and staff work collaboratively with the placing authority to ensure that transition plans meet young people's needs.

Staffing levels meet the needs of young people. However, there have been some recent staff changes, including a new manager, and an experienced senior member of staff has recently left the home. The impact of these changes is minimal as the manager and core staff provide effective support to new members of staff. Induction, supervision and staff training are well managed. However, it is now essential that the staff team is retained in order to ensure continuity for young people.

Recording by staff is detailed and shows excellent regard for the welfare of the young people. However, records have not always been securely stored and this has led to one young person gaining access to personal information. There are times when staff take documents out of the building, for example in case they need to report young people as missing. It is essential that such documentation is secured while in transit in order to protect the confidentiality and privacy of young people.

Young people receive consistent care and thrive because staff work as a team and respond well to the leadership of the manager. New staff receive well-organised inductions and work alongside experienced staff members. Young people experience consistent care because staff are well trained and their performance is reviewed with regular supervision. Staff meetings provide an additional forum for staff to review their practice and the needs of the young people.

The new manager and staff are very child-focused in their approach. This is clearly reflected in the home's development plan. Staff and young people are actively engaged in projects to decorate the home, improve the garden area with play equipment, set up an allotment and keep chickens.

The manager has a clear understanding of her monitoring responsibilities. This includes responding to independent monitoring reports, which show good compliance with the

regulatory framework. There is one statutory requirement and two recommendations set as a result of this inspection.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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:** 1213416

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Reflexion Care Group Limited

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

**Responsible individual:** Gregory Watson

**Registered manager:** post vacant

## Inspector

Elaine Cray, social care inspector

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