

# 1256638

Registered provider: Reflexion Care Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care for up to three children who have suffered adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and presenting complex behaviours. Children may have learning disabilities. The home is privately owned and forms part of a large social care organisation, which offers an education service and therapeutic support.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

### Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2021

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<b>good</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 24 February 2020

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

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/02/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
06/08/2019	Full	Good
12/02/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
29/08/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

## Inspection judgements

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

At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home. Two children have lived there for two years and one child for 10 months. Careful matching and well-managed moves ensure that children have stable long-term placements. As a result, the three children currently being cared for are settled. They say that they like living in the home and they like the staff.

Children receive excellent support to help them prepare to live independently. Bespoke independence plans set practical, gradual targets to enable children to practise budgeting, shopping, cooking, and using public transport. Regular meetings help children to review their progress and enable staff to adapt the programme and their support accordingly. This individualised support develops children's self-confidence as well as their practical skills.

Since the last inspection, one child, who lived at the home for three years, has moved into semi-independent accommodation. Staff worked closely with the placing authority and involved the child in decisions. They helped the child to personalise his new home and visited him after the move. This individualised support helps children to feel confident and to settle.

Overall, the home is well maintained and has a homely feel. Staff help children to personalise their bedrooms and display photos of family. The dining room is the hub of the home where children and staff sit together to eat an evening meal and talk about the day. However, there are areas that look tired and need attention. Some windows need cleaning and are without curtains or blinds. This detracts from the otherwise homely feel of the home.

Staff ensure that children's physical health needs are met by registering them with local health services. The manager and staff work closely with the company clinician to understand children's emotional health needs. Staff then talk with children and help them to develop strategies to manage their emotions. This means that, over time, children's physical and emotional health improves and children develop strategies to manage their behaviours.

Children make good progress with their education. This is because staff understand children's barriers to learning and are creative in helping children to overcome them. Staff and managers are not afraid to advocate for a change when they feel this is needed to ensure that children's individual needs are met. This resulted in a change of college provision for a child who was unhappy and not progressing in his provision at the time. All three children attend full-time education and are making good progress.

Staff ensure that children have clear routines and firm boundaries. Children have individualised bedtime routines, which include staff spending time with children

talking and reading stories with them. Staff therefore nurture children in the way a good parent would.

Staff encourage children's hobbies and interests, and they arrange for them to attend clubs in the local community. Children also enjoy a range of activities with staff that are captured through photographs and memory books. Staff plan activities with the children, such as gaming challenges, to raise funds for charity. Creating opportunities to spend time with children means that staff and children develop meaningful relationships based on shared interests.

Records are not always written in a way that helps children to understand their life story. Staff complete children's records in a way that is impersonal and jargonistic. This means that children do not have a balanced record of their time in the home that they can look at in the future and which may help them to build resilience.

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

Some risk assessments are completed without sufficient information about children's behaviours. Also, causes for some children's complex and challenging behaviours are not always identified. Children's views about their own triggers and strategies that staff can use to de-escalate these behaviours are missing. Although staff are knowledgeable about the children, this shortfall leaves a gap in staff knowledge to successfully manage all known risks. It compromises the ability of new and cover staff to quickly understand children's behaviours and how to manage them.

On one occasion following a restraint, managers did not ensure that records contained full and accurate information. They did not identify that staff were not offered a debrief within regulatory timescales after they have restrained a child. Following the debrief, managers did not discuss with staff how their behaviours may have escalated a child's behaviours. This represents a missed opportunity for managers to review and reflect on staff practice in a timely way.

Although children do not go missing from the home, protocols are in place which tell staff what to do should they go missing. Information has also been shared with the police. On the rare occasion that a child leaves the home in an unplanned way, staff keep the child in sight and use their skills and their strong relationship with the child to calm the situation and bring the child home.

Vigilant and highly skilled staff understand the risks that children face online. Staff constantly talk with children about these risks and use research to educate them. This means that children learn how to be increasingly safe online.

Staff talk with children about bullying, using bespoke resources in planned conversations. They praise and reward children's kindness to one another and their positive behaviours. As a result, children say they feel safe in the home and that bullying does not happen.

When children make allegations, they are taken seriously. Managers work in partnership with children's social workers and the local authority designated officer. They carry out thorough investigations, which include listening closely to the views of children. Children therefore feel confident to talk with managers and staff about any worries or concerns.

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

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2020 and is appropriately experienced and qualified to manage a children's home. The manager maintains good oversight of the home, using a range of review and monitoring systems.

The manager knows the children exceptionally well. She spends time with them and talks proudly of the progress they have made. The manager listens to children's views and is a strong advocate for them. Careful matching ensures that children's progress and positive experiences are not compromised. Children are extremely settled in the home.

There have been significant changes to the staff team since September 2020. Six members of staff and a therapist have left the company and eight have joined. Great effort has been made to ensure that children's care has not been compromised. This includes the manager and the home's core staff working additional shifts, and the use of bank staff who are known to the children. These efforts have helped to sustain some consistency and stability for the children. However, despite these efforts, the manager acknowledges that the children's willingness to form relationships with staff has been affected.

Effective partnership working ensures that children receive well-coordinated care that promotes their safety and well-being. Feedback gathered from professionals during the inspection was extremely positive. A social worker described a child's regular school attendance as 'a huge milestone'. A social worker praised staff for being flexible and working in partnership with a child's family. The social worker said that time spent with family is led by the child and had maintained the child's identity. This demonstrates the partnership working and child-focused approach that the registered manager and staff deliver through their care of children.

Staff receive an in-depth, good-quality induction that includes face-to-face training in supporting behaviour and the company model of care. Staff told the inspector that they feel supported by the manager and that this helps them to develop their practice. This is reinforced through regular supervision and an annual appraisal that is focussed on staff development.

Managers do not keep staff rotas in accordance with regulation. This shortfall means that the rotas remain unclear about when staff have been in contact with young people, should this information be needed in the future.

## 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—</p> <p>staff who—</p> <p>take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. (Regulation 7 (1)(c))</p> <p>This specifically relates to managers seeking children's views to inform their risk assessment and behaviour management plans.</p>	9 January 2021
<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>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))</p> <p>This specifically relates to managers ensuring that risk assessments and behaviour management plans include sufficient information for staff to fully understand risks to children.</p>	9 January 2021
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>the name of the child;</p>	9 January 2021

<p>details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure (“the user”), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.</p> <p>(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv))</p> <p>This relates to managers ensuring that they always provide staff with a debrief within 48 hours following a restraint.</p> <p>It also refers to managers ensuring that they effectively evaluate the actions of staff in the restraint.</p>	
<p>Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children’s home.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4;</p>	<p>9 January 2021</p>

ensure that the records are kept up to date; and

retain the records for at least 15 years from the date of the last entry. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c))

This specifically relates to ensuring that managers keep accurate records of the times that staff have worked in the home.

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children. The home should be a well-maintained and attractive place for children to spend time in. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 13.9)

## 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:** 1256638

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

**Registered provider:** Reflexion Care Group Limited

**Registered provider address:** Fitzroy Academy, Cruckton, Shrewsbury SY5 8PR

**Responsible individual:** Gary Johnson

**Registered manager:** Sophie Thomas

## Inspector

Karen Gillingwater, Social Care Inspector

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