

# Garden Cottage Care Home Service

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
18 July 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Reflexion Care Group Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2013012183

**Service no:**  
CS2017362702

## About the service

Garden Cottage is a care home for children and young people. The service is owned and managed by Reflexions Care Group Limited and is located near Dalmally, in a rural part of Argyllshire.

The property comprises a double storey house, set in a wooded area, overlooking a small loch. A large dining kitchen, lounge, individual bedroom and bathroom facilities provide young people with spacious and bright accommodation.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 3 July 2024. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spent time in the company of young people using the service and obtained feedback from family members
- spoke with eight members of staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- gathered feedback from visiting professionals.

**Key messages**

- Outcomes for young people were good
- The physical environment offered young people new experiences
- Personal planning highlighted young people's goals but more was needed to evidence SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timebound) outcomes
- Advocacy provision was in place
- More was needed to evidence consistency and continuity of care for young people
- Staff qualifications was a key development priority

**From this inspection we evaluated this service as:**

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	4 - Good
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

## How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for young people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The setting at Garden Cottage offered young people a safe physical environment where natural surroundings often provided a stark contrast to young people's prior experiences. This environment was optimised when providing young people's care and support. Learning about nature and the outdoors helped young people to build confidence and develop new skills, through activities, including camping and bush craft, wild swimming and kayaking. Supported by passionate leadership, the staff group had been able to influence young people to reflect on previous life experience and open their minds to new possibilities.

The process of personal planning helped to identify what was important to young people and plans sought to optimise their interests and abilities. For young people, it also allowed them to prepare for their future, by creating connections, friendships and opportunities to gain valuable experience. The service nurtured and respected young people, supporting personal interests, while utilising the diverse experience and interests of staff. For some, this helped them to realise personal ambitions. By creating a personal project, those young people were supported to consider how their talent in music could lead to opportunities in the future. Their involvement also provided a means of managing stress and frustration, improving their mental health and wellbeing. Although we were encouraged by the continued development of personal plans, there was still work to be done to evidence SMART outcomes. As we identified this as an area for improvement at the last inspection, we will repeat this following this inspection. **(Area for improvement 1)**.

Maintaining connections with family was fully acknowledged as being important to young people. Supporting them to keep in touch and to spend time with family, offered a sense of stability and belonging. With support from staff, there was a strong sense that family relationships had improved for some young people and we received positive feedback from family members about the service, with some expressing that 'staff are great and they keep me updated'. Parents generally commenting that staff helped them and their child to stay positive and get the most from their time in Garden Cottage.

Links with advocacy services have been developed and, upon arrival young people were informed of this support. As young people had the right to this independent support, they were given information to help them understand where advocacy can help. Young people equally had the right to decline advocacy and where this occurred, it was clearly evidenced.

Whilst we accepted the benefits of dynamic risk assessment when allocating staff to support young people, we believed that more should be done to ensure consistency and continuity of care is well evidenced. The importance of relationship based practice was well understood and therefore, to provide assurance of good care practices, this will form an area for improvement **(Area for Improvement 2)**.

Our evaluation of staff experience and qualifications, highlighted that the majority of staff had previous experience in other sectors. Although they demonstrated a range of transferrable skills, including involving young people in their care and showing empathy and compassion, there were limited numbers of staff with social care or residential child care experience. This meant that there was a need for them to progress toward holding suitable qualifications. We advised that staff development should be a priority and that formal qualifications should be progressed at the earliest opportunity. We have identified this as an area for improvement **(Area for improvement 3)**.

## Areas for improvement

1. To support the achievement of positive outcomes for children and young people, the provider should ensure that the recording of care plans comply with SMART principles.

This should include, but not limited to, the clear recording of specific actions, these should be realistic, measurable and have an identified timeframe for completion.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

2. To ensure that the care and support for young people is optimised, the provider should ensure consistency and continuity of support is well evidenced.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'My care and support is consistent because people work well together' (HSCS,3.19) and 'I am supported and cared for by people I know so that I experience consistency and continuity', (HSCS, 4.16).

3. To ensure that young people receive high quality care and support from staff who are qualified for their role, the provider should ensure that formal qualifications are progressed at the earliest opportunity.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes', (HSCS, 3.14).

## What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

### Areas for improvement

#### Previous area for improvement 1

To support the achievement of positive outcomes for children and young people, the provider should ensure that the recording of care plans comply with SMART principles. This should include, but not limited to, the clear recording of specific actions, these should be realistic, measurable and have an identified timeframe for completion.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

**This area for improvement was made on 11 July 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

The provider had made some progress toward this area for improvement. However we believed that further work was needed and we have therefore repeated this at this inspection.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

The provider must ensure that all staff receive sufficient and regular training in medication handling and recording and that an appropriate record is maintained.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

**This area for improvement was made on 11 July 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

Staff training records demonstrated that staff had been given the knowledge for managing medications. Organisational policy and procedures had previously been reviewed and we considered to be robust.

### Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	4 - Good
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	4 - Good

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