



Arolygiaeth Gofal
Cymru
Care Inspectorate
Wales

Inspection Report

SAfER Fostering



140 Inglestone Road, Wickwar, Wotton-under-edge, GL12 8PJ



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www.saferfostering.org.uk

The inspection visit took place on 28/04/2026

Service Information:

Operated by: SAfER Fostering CIC

Care Type: Fostering Service

Main language(s): English

Promotion of Welsh language and culture: The provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards a bilingual service.

Themes:



Well-being



Care & Support



Environment



Leadership & Management

Summary:

SAfER Fostering (Secure Attachments from Empathic Reparenting) is not-for-profit and reinvests resources to further support, benefit and improve children's outcomes. The service recruits and supports foster carers, referred to by the service as foster parents, to care for children who have experienced trauma. The service uses therapeutic, evidence-based approaches to inform care practices.

Children experience positive well-being in stable, nurturing homes. They feel safe, valued and listened to. This helps them build strong relationships and progress in all areas of their development. Children are carefully matched with foster families and benefit from stable, long-term relationships, which promote their sense of belonging. Foster parents receive excellent support, supervision and training to help them meet children's needs effectively.

Children live in safe, well-maintained homes and take part in activities within their local communities. These opportunities support their confidence, social development and contribute positively to their identity.

Leadership and management are excellent. They promote a strong, trauma-informed culture across the service. They are passionate and committed to delivering therapeutic care which supports children to achieve the best outcomes. Foster parents and staff feel supported and valued. Systems for quality assurance, monitoring and continuous improvement are well established and effective.

Findings:



Well-being

Children experience positive well-being outcomes because the service places a strong emphasis on promoting their rights, voice and individuality. They receive a welcome guide tailored to their age and understanding, helping them prepare for moving into their new home. These guides include contributions from care-experienced young people and provide clear information about rights and entitlements.

Children receive support to contribute meaningfully to decisions about their lives. Their views are actively sought through day-to-day interactions, direct work, reviews and consultation activities. Child support workers provide consistent, long-term support to children, meeting with them regularly to develop trusted relationships which help children express their views and feelings.

Children's physical, emotional and mental well-being are supported to a high standard. They are registered with universal health services and receive support to attend appointments. The service advocates on their behalf to ensure timely access to support, including the use of privately funded healthcare to reduce delays. Foster parents promote consistent and predictable routines, helping children feel safe and secure. Children are encouraged to take part in a wide range of recreational and social activities, supporting their confidence, identity and sense of belonging. Children and their foster families have access to two caravans for holidays which provide opportunities to create positive memories.

The service promotes children's education, learning and development. Where children experience disruption, foster parents and staff work closely with education professionals to support stability. This includes providing guidance to help schools understand children's lived experiences, how these experiences impact learning and how best to respond to these needs. Foster parents advocate strongly for children and encourage their aspirations. Children receive support to develop independence skills appropriate to their age and stage of development, and the provider contributes to and monitors their savings effectively. The service provider has recently started a trust fund to support young people as they transition into adulthood, offering ongoing support as would typically be provided by children's birth families.

Children are safeguarded. Staff and foster parents understand their responsibilities and receive training to help them identify and reduce risks. When concerns arise, appropriate and timely action is taken to promote children's safety.

Children are supported to maintain relationships with people who are important to them, including birth family members, foster families and peers. They live in stable, nurturing homes where they develop strong, trusting relationships. Many children experience long-term stability and relationships with their foster families, with some remaining into adulthood under 'When I'm Ready' arrangements.



Care & Support

Children receive excellent care and support which is consistently child centred, nurturing and informed by a strong understanding of their individual needs and experiences. The service's therapeutic model of care is fully embedded. Care planning and daily practice reflect a rights-based approach. This ensures children's views, experiences and individual circumstances shape the support they receive.

The service has a robust matching process which ensures children referred to the service are matched with foster families who are suitable and the service can meet their needs. A comprehensive analysis is completed which includes identifying children's needs, strengths, vulnerabilities, the impact on the fostering family and identifying support which may be needed to increase stability. Therapeutic oversight from the service's attachment therapist informs these matching decisions, ensuring children and their foster families are prepared and supported from the outset. Introductions are carefully planned and supported through the use of therapeutic narratives and planned visits, enabling children to understand and prepare for their transition.

Foster parents and staff demonstrate a strong understanding of children's care and support plans and deliver care which reflects agreed outcomes. Therapeutic parenting is consistently applied in daily practice. The service has developed a trauma tracker for children, which provides a comprehensive understanding of their history, experiences, any unmet needs and strategies which will support them to achieve improved outcomes. Alongside this, comprehensive support plans and risk assessments provide clear strategies and guide the team around children on how best to respond and provide individualised care.

The care and support delivered to children is reviewed frequently and includes consultations with the service's attachment therapist who gives detailed, practical advice. Foster parents told us this support is invaluable and improves stability. The service understands the impact of children's previous experience and how this impacts their sense of safety and self-worth. The service is proactive, when risks increase or concerns are raised about children's stability. The service works closely with commissioners and relevant professionals to support co-ordinated, child-focused decision making. Monitoring of children's behaviours and emotional responses are thorough and detailed. This evidence is used to inform care planning and advocacy, ensuring children receive appropriate support. The commitment from the service to reduce blame and shame for children and foster families when challenges arise is exceptional.

Feedback we have received from involved professionals highlights the consistently high standards of care and support provided, describing the service as delivering child-centred, expert support and describing foster carers as '*exemplary*'. Children regularly feedback, they feel happy and a part of their foster family with many wanting to remain long term.



Environment

Children receive care and support in foster homes which are warm, welcoming and promote a strong sense of belonging. The foster families home environment is thoroughly assessed, prior to providing care. Health and safety assessments are completed as part of the approval process and are reviewed at least annually. These assessments consider the suitability of the home environment to meet children's needs, including space, safety and facilities. Children are supported to personalise their bedrooms, which contributes to creating nurturing, homely environments where they feel safe and valued.

Foster homes are well maintained, and foster parents understand their responsibilities in ensuring their homes remain safe. The service undertakes both announced and unannounced home visits which provide opportunities to observe the physical environment and ensure it continues to meet children's needs. This consistent oversight supports safeguarding and helps ensure children benefit from stable living arrangements.

The wider community environment further enhances children's experiences. Children receive support to access a range of local activities, clubs and social opportunities, including sports, arts and leisure activities. The service provider hosts social events throughout the year in accessible community venues, promoting inclusion and encouraging participation. These opportunities support children's social development, confidence and help create positive memories with their foster families. In addition, the service provider owns two caravans which are available for children, foster families and staff to enjoy holidays. Foster parents told us these are valued, providing consistency and familiarity for children. One caravan is fully accessible, ensuring these opportunities are inclusive for all to enjoy.

The service provider's office accommodation is appropriate for its size and function. There is suitable space available for meetings, supervision and direct work. While staff agile work, as they support foster families across Wales, they can access office facilities when needed. Staff told us they enjoy the flexibility of agile working and have opportunities for regular catch ups online and team away days.

Information management systems support effective oversight of the care and support delivered to children. Records are held securely on an electronic system, allowing for timely information sharing and response to emerging needs. Foster parents record information directly onto a database application, which enables prompt communication with the service and supports monitoring of children's well-being.



Leadership & Management

Leadership and management arrangements are highly effective. There is a clear commitment to maintaining a positive culture in which children, foster families and staff feel safe, valued, respected and supported. Leaders bring relevant lived and professional experience of supporting children who have experienced trauma, which positively informs the service's approach to care.

The service ethos is underpinned by a well-established therapeutic model of care, which is consistently embedded across all aspects of service delivery. This model helps ensure practice remains centred on meeting children's needs, enabling them to achieve stability and positive outcomes. The service advocates strongly on behalf of children, promoting their rights and ensuring they receive appropriate care and support when they need it. Leaders work collaboratively with partner agencies, including commissioners, to strengthen understanding of the impact of children's lived experiences and how best to respond. This includes providing training and using evidence-based practice to influence care planning, which improve outcomes.

Governance arrangements are robust and provide effective oversight of the service. Leaders actively seek and analyse feedback through a range of consultation methods and use this to inform service development. Quality assurance systems are well developed, ensuring high standards are maintained, with strengths and areas for improvement identified and acted on. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed, updated and embed the services therapeutic approach.

The service is supported by a skilled and committed workforce. Staff structures and specialist roles are well aligned with the needs of children and foster families. Staff are experienced, therapeutically trained and demonstrate confidence in responding effectively to children's needs. There is a strong emphasis on professional development, supported by a structured induction, regular supervision, ongoing training and qualifications. Staff are given dedicated time each month to complete training, which enhances their skills and supports the delivery of a therapeutic service. Recent investment in a dedicated training manager role further strengthens this area. Leaders prioritise staff well-being and retention through initiatives such as private healthcare and a four-day working week. Staff report feeling well supported, contributing to workforce stability and continuity of relationships for children and foster families. One member of staff told us, *"I am proud to work here, to ensure the children have the best possible chance in life."*

Prospective foster parents are assessed using a bespoke therapeutic fostering assessment, which considers their ability to provide therapeutic care. Pre-approval training supports prospective foster parents to develop the skills required to meet children's needs. Foster parents are supported through effective supervision, training and responsive out-of-hours arrangements. They have access to up-to-date guidance and report receiving timely advice and guidance when needed. Supervision is reflective and focused on children's experiences and the well-being of the foster family. This enables early identification of pressures, with appropriate action taken to support stability. Foster parents feel valued as part of the professional network and describe a strong ethos of reducing shame and blame when challenges arise. They report leaders, managers and staff go above and beyond to support them. Additional support is available to foster parents including an

empathic listener who has lived experience of therapeutic parenting. Training is comprehensive and highly valued, supporting foster parents to understand and respond to children's needs and symptoms of the trauma they have experienced. Monthly professional development groups, led by the attachment therapist, provide further opportunities for reflection and embedding therapeutic approaches. Some foster parents have also accessed innovative psychosensory therapy which is offered by the service to help reduce the impact of triggers which cause distress and help build their resilience. Foster parents and their children aged under eighteen also receive private healthcare.

There are effective arrangements to monitor and review foster parents' responsibilities. Annual reviews provide a comprehensive evaluation of their skills and practice, identify support needs, and incorporate feedback from children, foster parents and involved professionals. Foster parents continued suitability is considered by the service providers fostering panel in line with good practice, ensuring independent scrutiny and informed recommendations. The panel includes members with lived care experience, strengthening oversight and adding valuable insight.

Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

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