

SC478315

Registered provider: The Serendipity Centre Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The privately owned home is registered to care for up to four children who have complex behavioural difficulties. The organisation which owns the home also has sister homes in the local area and a therapeutic education setting. The home specialises in caring for girls who have experienced physical and/or emotional trauma in their past.

The home has not had a registered manager since November 2018.

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 February 2019

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 requires improvement to be good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 13 December 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/12/2017	Full	Good
18/01/2017	Full	Outstanding
31/05/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/01/2016	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
<p>The care planning standard is that children– receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14(1)(a), (2)(b)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, keep care plans up to date.</p>	30/04/2019
<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if– the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children. (Regulation 24(1)(a))</p>	30/04/2019
<p>Case records must be kept in a secure place after the child has ceased to be accommodated in the home. (Regulation 36 (2)(d))</p> <p>In particular, store confidential files securely.</p>	30/04/2019

Recommendations

- Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)

In particular, the manager should address repeated concerns.
- Measurements of progress should include qualitative information such as how well the child is being prepared for their next stage of education. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 26, paragraph 5.3)

In particular, ensure children's positive transitions to the organisation's school.
- Regulation 11(2) sets out the expectations on staff in building a positive relationship with each child and helping the child to have positive relationships with others. 'Others' includes individuals both inside and outside the home.

(‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 38, paragraph 8.6).

In particular, record complaints by the neighbours and how staff help children to respond to these.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children experience positive moves into the home. Leaders and managers work closely with the multidisciplinary team, parents, carers and the professionals involved in children’s care to ensure that they can meet their needs. They consider the children who already live at the home by preparing them, during house meetings, for any new children moving in.

All the children have a place at the organisation’s school or local college. Staff advocated for one child to access the school following a long period, prior to her moving into the home, when she did not attend formal education. Another young person is attending college and pursuing her interest in working with children. Staff supported her to undertake valuable work experience at a play scheme.

The manager recorded a detailed account of the support in place to ensure another child’s continued education during a difficult period at her previous school. This was good practice. However, this practice could be further enhanced by evidencing her successful transition to the organisation’s school. This would help the child to reflect on the experience positively.

Staff help the children to work through their emotional difficulties through close and nurturing relationships. The children enjoy spending time with staff doing activities in the home and the community. Children spoke positively about their relationships with staff.

Close professional working with the organisation’s therapy team and child and adolescent mental health services means that staff have regular, helpful consultations. Weekly ‘spotlight’ sessions focus on children’s emotional and behavioural needs to help staff to understand and manage them. This equips them with the necessary knowledge and skills to help each child.

The staff value children’s relationships with their families. They ensure that each child gets the right support to make their time with their family successful. For example, one child has two staff to support her and a brother or sister to have a positive time. The staff are flexible and will adapt the activity or length of time in response to the children’s wishes. Another child has re-established a relationship with a family member, following support and encouragement from the staff.

Staff use different methods to ensure that children can express their views. Key-work sessions occur weekly and cover areas specific to each child, for example safe use of the internet, contact with family and safety in the community. Regular house meetings are held. However, the manager has not fully addressed some recurring themes.

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

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of safeguarding issues. Staff responded swiftly to an incident when a child was potentially putting herself at risk while using the internet. They explained their concerns, and the child was able to understand and agree to the measures that staff took to protect her.

Staff have a high level of concern for children's safety. When a child went missing, staff followed the missing-from-care policies and searched for her. They located her after a short time and returned home with her. She has not gone missing since this occasion.

All the children are encouraged to manage themselves safely in the community. Staff contact children regularly while they are away from the home to ensure that they are safe. The children's positive relationships with staff mean that they respond positively, knowing that they are cared for.

Staff successfully use de-escalation techniques to reduce the need for physical intervention. The record of incidents clearly demonstrates what led to the physical intervention. Staff talk to children afterwards to understand their views. The manager reviews all physical interventions to evaluate the appropriateness of any actions taken. Any learning is shared with the team.

Health and safety measures are implemented, which protects children and staff from risk of harm. All checks are up to date and appropriate fire safety measures are in place. Staff ensure that children know what to do in the event of a fire, and regular fire drills reinforce the information shared when children move in.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Leaders and managers have not maintained effective oversight of children's care plans. A child's plan was not updated to reflect a change of circumstances. The manager is in the process of moving information onto an electronic recording database. This has meant that there is some inconsistency in the way that some information is available to staff.

A child had a successful stay at the home as a break from another home within the organisation. The manager ensured that staff from her home worked with her to settle her in and provide consistent care. The staff team was told verbally about how to care for this child. A risk assessment and support plan from the previous home was shared, however these were not updated to reflect the additional information which had led to her stay at this home.

During the inspection, a child could enter the office where confidential files were stored in full view. These files were accessible temporarily, while they were being archived, yet there was a risk of them being seen or taken.

CCTV is used in communal areas. The reasoning for this is inconsistent, as the inspector was told by one manager that it was to safeguard the children and by another manager that it was to support staff in case of allegations. The use of these cameras is not justified by a clear risk assessment for each child to identify how they assist in safeguarding the child.

Team meetings and supervision sessions enable staff to share their knowledge and information about the children. These meetings are of a good quality and demonstrate reflective thinking and support for staff.

Staff encourage children to develop positive relationships within the community, including their neighbours. However, when there have been complaints from the neighbours these have not been recorded, including the measures taken to help children to make amends. The effectiveness of staff responses cannot be evaluated.

New staff are recruited subject to a thorough vetting procedure. The induction programme ensures that the staff have the necessary information and training for their roles. Training courses available to staff ensure that they remain skilled and knowledgeable to care well for the children. The manager drew up a workforce plan to identify any gaps in staff's training, skills and experience.

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 difference 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: SC478315

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Serendipity Centre Limited

Registered provider address: 1st floor, Goodlands House, St Lukes Close, Hedge End, Southampton SO30 2US

Responsible individual: Susan Tinson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Suzy Lemmy, social care inspector

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