

# SC463558

Registered provider: The Serendipity Centre Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is registered for six children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is privately owned by an organisation which also owns other homes and a therapeutic educational setting. It specialises in caring for girls who have experienced physical and/or emotional trauma in their past. The home provides access to a range of therapeutic services.

**Inspection dates:** 16 to 17 May 2017

**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:** 31 October 2016

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Good

**Enforcement action since last inspection**

None

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because

- Young people have made good progress from their starting points since arriving at the home.
- Young people attend and engage in education. All young people make progress within their individual capabilities. Staff have good relationships with school, and use this to promote consistency in the approach used to support young people across both settings.
- Staff support and encourage young people to develop their social and personal skills by completing basic household chores and taking part in activities.
- Each young person is supported to address their physical and emotional health needs. Staff have referred and supported young people to attend to their specific health needs.
- Young people are involved in decisions made in the home; staff consult young people daily when planning meals and activities. Each young person has personalised their bedroom and chosen how to decorate it.
- Meaningful and regular one-to-one sessions provide protected time for young people and staff to develop relationships and review achievements and areas to develop.
- Staff apply a robust approach to managing safeguarding concerns: there is clarity to their recording and appropriate referral to other agencies, and this has led to safer outcomes.
- Staff offer a wide variety of activities to young people including horse riding, youth club and physical activities.
- Young people have good relationships with staff; each has a key adult whom they can trust and confide in.
- Staff work collaboratively with others outside of the home, ensuring that all are involved and aware of progress and issues affecting each young person.

The children's home's areas for development

- The manager needs to apply for registration with Ofsted.
- The staff team has been unsettled and requires support to continue to embed the good practice.
- The staff need to secure level 3 qualifications, and the manager should evidence if they have already attained an equivalent qualification.
- The supervision records should be maintained in an easily accessible way.

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
31/10/2016	Full	Good
29/06/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
09/02/2016	Full	Outstanding
15/10/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

### Recommendations

- Qualification requirements for staff are listed in annex A of The Guide: The registered person should keep a record of the information they have considered to establish 'equivalence'. ('Guide to the Children's Homes regulations including the quality standards' page 68, paragraph 1.4)

### Inspection judgements

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

Young people make good progress while living at the home. They are engaging in education, addressing their emotional and physical health needs and taking part in activities which provide them with new experiences and opportunities. The home has a pleasant family feel to it. Young people and staff gather daily to share the evening meal; they chatter enthusiastically about the events of the day and plans for the evening.

The 'pen portrait' and 'All About Me' documents used are practical, child-friendly and provide essential information about each young person, their likes and their dislikes. Young people's care plans are detailed and thorough, providing information about goals and aspirations to achieve while residing at the home. The manager plans to review them to ensure that they are child-friendly and specific.

Those young people who have recently arrived at the home are settling well. They have swiftly formed positive relationships with staff and peers. Staff have supported this through well-considered and planned transitions into the home. Young people visit and meet those already here during this transition process.

Staff encourage young people to address their physical and emotional health needs. They support young people to attend all appointments relating to their health needs, and for some have successfully addressed long-standing health needs. The home is part of a larger organisation which provides required therapy services. Young people are engaging in therapy and developing positive skills to assist them in self-regulating and managing their anxieties and emotions. They are exploring their life stories, and the impact these have had upon them, in a safe and supportive environment.

Young people are all engaged in education; staff support those who are exploring new options and opportunities. Effective communication by staff with education providers has a positive impact on young people's engagement in education. Those who have not been engaged in education previously are now attending regularly. Staff support young people to complete their homework. Staff are assisting young people to seek work experience and voluntary and part-time work opportunities.

All young people are encouraged to follow an interest or hobby of their choosing. They each have a protected activity which is part of their therapy programme, enabling them to develop positive skills for managing their feelings and emotions. These include physical activities such as boxing, horse riding, music, caring for animals and art and craft. Staff encourage and motivate young people to attend activities which are beneficial to their overall health and well-being. Young people also help with a basic daily chore in the home, and this helps to develop their life skills.

Staff offer young people regular meaningful one-to-one sessions which afford young people opportunities to explore issues which are important to them. The sessions provide essential personal education about risk factors and how to keep safe. They also offer young people an opportunity for quality one-to-one time with a member of staff by going to a café or just chatting. Champions (or key-workers) have special relationships with young people and they are young people's first point of contact to support them.

The voice of young people is very evident in the home; they are vocal and regularly make choices and contribute to key decisions about the home. They are involved in choosing furnishings for their bedrooms, selecting activities and menu planning. Young people are encouraged to voice their views in a variety of ways, which include on the worries forms, in house meetings and in one-to-one sessions.

Staff facilitate and assist with family contact. They have supported one young person to have contact with a sibling for the first time in two years. Staff follow detailed contact plans, which helps to ensure that contact between young people and families is well managed for all parties. Staff advocate for young people; they request reviews and raise issues with placing authorities if they consider that plans do not accurately address young people's needs.

Young people are well cared for and feel part of the family in the home. Staff celebrate each young person's achievements and anniversaries. Staff focus on key celebrations alongside planning regular house celebrations, treats and special trips out. They recently went out for dinner as a large group, which was enjoyed by all. Young people report having good open and honest relationships with staff who they say have helped them through difficult and fun times.

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

Young people report feeling safe and each having an adult they can trust and confide in.

They seek support and guidance from known staff when they are anxious or worried. Staff assist young people to explore ways to manage their emotions and to develop strategies and skills to enable them to work through the challenges they face.

The home has a robust approach to safeguarding and supporting young people to keep safe. Key-work sessions focus on risks posed to young people and provide practical information and advice about how to keep safe and minimise risk. Young people have learned about the risks associated with using social media and communicating with unknown people. Managers apply a low threshold for reporting and acting on concerns; staff have raised concerns swiftly and referred and reported them as required. They have been open and honest and this has established good collaborative working with external professionals.

Incidents of self-harm are well managed by staff who are calm and follow clear plans for each young person. They explore the cause and impact of this behaviour with the rigorous approach that they bring to safeguarding concerns. Staff refer, and seek additional support and guidance when required.

When young people raise complaints these are usually explored and responded to. However, complaints made in November have not been explored or responded to and this caused a young person to feel undervalued and think that staff did not care about her. After this was identified leaders and managers have reiterated the required expectation regarding complaint responses. Since this time all concerns and complaints have been responded to in a timely manner. Records evidence that young people are given a response, explanation or outcome to the complaint or concern raised.

No allegations against staff have been made since the last inspection. All staff have received allegation management training and possess clear and up-to-date knowledge of what is required if an event was to occur.

Episodes of missing are managed through a collaborative and coordinated approach. Staff actively seek young people and request the support of additional agencies in line with their individual plan. Staff welcome young people back to the home and offer young people the opportunity to explore and talk about the reasons for going missing.

Staff are trained in the home's preferred behaviour management approach. Staff manage incidents well, frequently calming young people and rarely using physical intervention. When restraint is used it is in its least restrictive form and for the shortest timescale possible. Staff complete detailed records of incidents that specify what occurred and which interventions were used and for how long. Staff offer young people an opportunity to retrospectively explore their views and feelings about the incident. Managers also review and reflect on the incident with staff to ensure they all learn from it.

Staff celebrate young people's progress and achievements through rewards and celebrations. They have given young people consequences following negative behaviours or incidents. These have included restricting access to the home's vehicle or not having

access to electronic devices. Staff have recorded these consequences and are gaining young people's views and thoughts about them.

Staff complete detailed risk assessments, which explore many known risk factors. Staff are trained to identify risks associated with child sexual exploitation. Risk assessments detail actions required to minimise risk. They are regularly reviewed and updated.

Detailed pre-admission risk assessments consider all of the known risks that a young person may present. Managers explore in detail the impact of admitting new young people on those already living in the home. Young people are prepared, supported and involved in the welcoming of new arrivals to the home.

Staff adhere to safer recruitment practice and newly appointed staff are provided with a thorough induction to the home. They complete a probation in which their practice and knowledge is regularly reviewed and monitored.

Leaders and managers ensure that the home is well-maintained and any damage is swiftly reported and repaired. There are regular audits of health and safety in the home with several tasks identified and acted on.

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

A day-to-day manager manages the home effectively. She is in the process of applying to become the registered manager. The previous registered manager resigned in July 2016. The responsible individual applied to be the registered manager as an interim measure. The application and payment were received but due to a breakdown in the online processes the application did not reach its final destination and a fit person interview was not completed. This was an administrative error on Ofsted's part and has, therefore, not impacted on this judgement.

There have been many changes in the home since the last inspection. Leaders and managers worked well to limit and manage the change, with minimal impact on the young people. Staff report feeling well led and having clarity about what they are aspiring to achieve as a staff team. The changes have produced a positive impact in the home.

There has been a high turnover of staff in the home and several new staff have been appointed. The newly appointed manager has promoted and supported the staff team to stabilise and settle. The team is in its infancy and continues to develop skills and practice as it establishes itself.

The home currently has staff vacancies which leaders and managers are addressing through a continual recruitment drive.

The day-to-day manager utilises a wide variety of systems and processes to assess and evaluate the quality of care provided in the home. The weekly and monthly manager's

checks provide regular scrutiny and review. The home's development plan provides clarity regarding areas which the manager wishes to improve and develop. Young people are involved in the review of the quality of care provided. They have completed questionnaires, purposefully sharing their views about the care they receive. The manager has not yet identified what actions will be completed to improve aspects identified as weak. The information and detail provided by the robust monthly independent visits to the home also inform the manager's development plan of tasks required.

The six-weekly collaborative network meetings review young people's care plans. Young people are encouraged to attend their review meetings, and staff support them to do so. The manager has good quality relationships with young people and good knowledge and understanding of each young person's needs. She requests external review when concerns arise or staff feel they are not meeting young people's needs.

Changes made to the staff induction process now better promote staff knowledge and understanding of the home's and organisation's ethos and values. Staff are guided to explore aspects of good practice and the organisation's expectation regarding staff conduct. Newly inducted staff report that this thorough induction process has been beneficial. They also complete a wide variety of core training which is specific to their role. This includes safeguard training, medication administration, behaviour management and first aid.

Supervision of staff has improved. Staff are now receiving regular, effective supervision and have their practice appraised at least annually. However, it became apparent during the inspection that the storage and filing of supervision records is not systematic and impedes retrieval.

Staff access a varied programme of training specific to their role. Staff have updated their knowledge about substance misuse and attachment theory. Staff either possess the required qualification or are enrolled to complete it. However, one member of staff does not possess this required qualification, and managers have not evidenced the equivalence of their current qualifications.

The home's statement of purpose is due a review, including an update on the current staffing for the home. The culture and ethos of the home as described in the statement of purpose is borne out in staff practice and their engagement with young people. Leaders, managers and staff make young people-centred decisions, which involve young people. Staff are caring and nurturing in their approach with young people. They encourage each young person to achieve their best within their capabilities.

Young people are well supported by staff to use community facilities. Staff form very positive relationships with community and voluntary groups, which has enabled young people to be well supported in their community.

## **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 who 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:** SC463558

**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

Amanda Maxwell, social care inspector

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