

## Children's homes inspection – Full

|                                    |                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>             | <b>31/10/2016</b>                                                                   |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | <b>SC463558</b>                                                                     |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>          | <b>Full</b>                                                                         |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>           | <b>Children's home</b>                                                              |
| <b>Registered provider</b>         | <b>The Serendipity Centre Limited</b>                                               |
| <b>Registered provider address</b> | <b>1st Floor, Goodlands House, St. Lukes Close, Hedge End, Southampton SO30 2US</b> |

|                               |                       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Responsible individual</b> | <b>Susan Tinson</b>   |
| <b>Registered manager</b>     | <b>Vacant</b>         |
| <b>Inspector</b>              | <b>Amanda Maxwell</b> |

|                                                                                                 |                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>                                                                          | <b>31/10/2016</b>           |
| <b>Previous inspection judgement</b>                                                            | <b>Outstanding</b>          |
| <b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>                                                 | <b>None</b>                 |
| <b>This inspection</b>                                                                          |                             |
| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b> | <b>Good</b>                 |
| The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.            |                             |
| <b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                              | <b>Good</b>                 |
| <b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                     | <b>Requires improvement</b> |

## SC463558

### Summary of findings

#### **The children's home provision is good because:**

- The home provides good-quality care, and young people make good progress.
- Each young person has a key adult whom they trust and can confide in.
- Staff support young people to learn skills, which help them towards independence.
- Warm, caring relationships between staff and young people have created an environment which is child focused.
- Education attendance levels are high, and there are robust plans in place to address and support those not engaging in full-time education.
- Staff work collaboratively with all parties, ensuring that plans are robust, effective and safe.
- Staff offer a wide variety of on- and off-site activities. They provide a full, diverse programme of activities and opportunities.
- The voice of the young person is strong and particularly heard in all reviews, plans and debriefs following incidents.
- One-to-one sessions provide essential education and an opportunity to explore important issues and develop positive relationships between young people and staff.
- Young people are developing strategies, which assist them to self-regulate and moderate their behaviour and emotions.
- Leaders have provided robust effective support to the home through a significant period of change in the staff team.

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meet(s) 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 leadership and management standard requires the registered person to:</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(2)(h))</p>                                                                            | 01/01/2017 |
| <p>Employment of staff:</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that all employees:</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33(4)(b)(c))</p> | 01/01/2017 |

## Full report

### 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 education 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.

### Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 29/06/2016      | Interim         | Declined effectiveness  |
| 09/02/2016      | Full            | Outstanding             |
| 15/10/2015      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 11/03/2015      | Full            | Outstanding             |
| 16/12/2014      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |

## Inspection judgements

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <p><b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p><b>Good</b></p> |
| <p>Young people have made good progress from their starting points since their arrival at the home. They are learning ways to self-regulate and manage their behaviour and emotions. All young people are accessing a variety of activities, enabling them to express themselves and explore new experiences.</p> <p>There have been several changes and challenges in the home, and staff have ensured that they focus on the needs of the young people. Senior managers and some staff have provided good stability and consistency through this period.</p> <p>All young people are engaged in education. Those who have lived in the home for a period of time have good attendance. They are making good academic progress within their own capabilities. Young people who are new to the home are supported to engage in education. They have transition plans, which support those who have been out of education for a period of time to integrate back into it.</p> <p>Staff support young people to attend to all of their physical and emotional health needs. They support them to address long-standing health issues, which is having a positive impact on their physical and emotional well-being. Young people are engaging in a variety of services, and staff refer on to specialist services when required.</p> <p>Young people are well cared for and supported in the home. Staff have good knowledge and insight into each young person’s needs. Pen portraits and the ‘All about me’ documents provide thorough descriptions of young people’s likes, dislikes, favourite clothes, activities and other helpful information that the young people feel is important to them. Support plans and other documents provide clarity and practical advice and guidance to staff, informing them how to meet young people’s needs.</p> <p>Managers are reviewing and updating all care plans. They recently identified that several records had been deleted or were missing. They have put plans in place to address this and to restore all information.</p> <p>Staff are interested in young people, their individual needs and what is affecting or worrying them. Staff prioritise time to talk with young people and support them to explore ways to manage worries and anxieties. Staff and young people have good relationships, and the young people seek guidance and physical and emotional support from staff.</p> <p>Young people are encouraged to engage in therapy, which is provided in varying forms, for example ‘my time’ protected activities and one-to-one sessions with therapists. The organisation employs a specialist who contributes to the overview</p> |                    |

and planning of individual therapy plans. Young people also write or voice their worries and concerns, and staff explore and act upon these. Young people are learning positive strategies to manage and regulate their emotions and anxieties safely.

Purposeful one-to-one sessions take place, and all staff may complete them. They provide young people with essential education, covering a wide variety of topics and themes, and explore risky behaviours. Topics have included stranger danger, relationships, future aspirations and conflicts with others. They allow opportunities for young people to talk through individual challenges, to develop relationships and build trust.

Staff offer a wide variety of activities in the home, including art and craft and themed evenings. Each young person is encouraged to develop interests or hobbies. Young people attend a variety of local clubs and voluntary groups, which enable them to make friends and to develop peer relationships. Activities that they have accessed include horse riding, ice skating and swimming. Staff also arrange group activities, and these have included holidays, trips to theme parks and meals out. Young people enjoy sharing stories about the activities and adventures that they have experienced. During the inspection, staff and young people enjoyed a fun evening of activities, including dressing up, sharing a meal together and playing games.

Young people are developing their personal, social and life skills. Staff and young people have developed targets to work towards. Young people each assist with basic chores in the home. They clear the table and assist with the washing up after the main meal. Each young person has learned new skills while living at the home. They are becoming more independent. Mealtimes are a key social activity in the home, when staff and young people share a meal and chat about the events of the day.

Staff follow detailed contact plans, which ensure that contact between young people and families is well managed for all parties. Staff request reviews and consider whether plans accurately address young people's needs in the regular network meetings.

|                                                                              |                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
|                                                                              | Judgement grade |
| <b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>           | <b>Good</b>     |
| Young people report feeling safe and having an adult whom 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, developing strategies and skills to enable them to work through the challenges that they face.

Staff have good knowledge and insight regarding the safeguarding policy, procedures and risk factors. They have good understanding and awareness about how to protect young people and keep them safe from harm. Staff apply a low-level threshold to reporting and recording concerns, which enables a swift response to any issue arising.

Staff follow detailed behaviour support plans, and all staff are trained in the home's behavioural approach. Behaviour support plans explore triggers and behaviours and detail how to support a young person. Staff seek to avoid the use of physical intervention by deploying a variety of de-escalation strategies. When physical intervention has been used, it has been in its lowest form for the shortest possible period. Staff provide positive role models and promote positive behaviour. They have completed in-house training to develop their approach to behaviour management. Staff seek and record young people's views following incidents, which has positively impacted on staff knowledge and understanding. However, managers have not routinely evaluated and monitored records and logs.

Staff give many more rewards than sanctions. They celebrate young people's achievements and positive behaviour by offering a wide variety of treats, trips out and rewards. Sanctions are restorative in nature and linked to the trigger or cause.

Staff apply a robust, coordinated approach to episodes of missing from care. Staff gain involvement from those outside the home. This has ensured that plans are detailed and thorough, with input from all agencies that have significant involvement. Episodes of missing are well managed, reported and recorded, and staff actively seek young people. Young people are welcomed on return, and requests are made for return to care interviews.

Risks associated with child sexual exploitation are thoroughly assessed. Plans detail how to minimise and reduce risk factors. Staff provide good-quality education and information in one-to-one sessions, promoting young people's ability to make informed decisions about engaging in risk-taking behaviours. Staff have worked closely with other agencies to ensure that plans are collaborative in their approach to the management of risk factors.

Young people complete worry and anxiety forms, and staff robustly respond to issues and concerns raised. Staff act on all concerns and worries, and records evidence responses, actions and outcomes.

Staff have referred and reported allegations to the designated officer. They have completed investigations, and records evidence incidents from instigation through to outcome.

Staff follow robust systems and procedures for managing and administering



medication, and all staff receive medication training.

The home is well maintained and presented. Staff swiftly respond to any damage.

Recruitment processes are thorough and meet the requirements required, to ensure that they comply with safer recruitment practice and guidance.

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| <b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| <p>There is currently no registered manager for the home. Senior leaders and managers have plans in place to address this. In the interim period, the responsible individual and other managers have regularly been present in the home. The focus of staff has been to support and maintain positive relationships with young people, enabling them to make continued good progress.</p> <p>There has been a high turnover of staff in the home since the last inspection. Staff who have departed from the home have not worked their notice periods. This has had a negative impact on the home and young people. There are seven new members of staff in the home. Senior managers are currently providing additional support, which is limiting the potentially negative impact of this on young people.</p> <p>Managers have acted on most of the requirements set at the previous inspection. However, they have not completed regular, consistent monitoring and evaluation of all required logs and records. There are several systems and tools to support the evaluation of practice, records and quality of care that have not been utilised to their full potential. Records do not clearly state whether issues identified have been acted on.</p> <p>Staff have not received regular, effective supervision, nor had their practice appraised at least annually.</p> <p>Staff access a varied programme of training, with regular updates in topics pertinent to their roles. Staff will access refresher training this month in the home's preferred method of behaviour management and first aid, for which staff either have the required qualification or are enrolled to complete.</p> <p>The home has staff vacancies, and a recent recruitment drive has been successful, and new staff are now in post. Staff complete an induction process over a six-month period, which is robust and effective, and staff begin to develop and build</p> |                             |

up their knowledge and skills. Leaders and managers are reviewing their recruitment processes to ensure that they are robust and effective.

Managers have good working relationships with those outside of the home. They regularly meet with others to review risk management and other plans collaboratively. This ensures that their knowledge is current and that they are focused on young people's needs.

## What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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