

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	18/01/2017
Unique reference number	SC478315
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	The Serendipity Centre Limited
Registered provider address	1st Floor, Goodlands House, St Luke's Close, Hedge End, Southampton SO30 2US

Responsible individual	Susan Tinson
Registered manager	Donna Morris
Inspector	Amanda Maxwell

Inspection date	18/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC478315

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Young people are making outstanding progress throughout their time in the home. They are all benefiting from residing here.
- Skilled, knowledgeable staff support young people to achieve their individual goals and targets.
- All young people are engaged in full-time education and making very good academic progress.
- The therapeutic support which young people access is having a very positive impact on their ability to manage the emotions arising from previous experiences and trauma.
- All young people are successfully engaged in addressing their physical and emotional health and this is having a positive impact on their future life chances.
- Staff engage young people in honest and trusting relationships. Young people seek guidance and support from staff especially when they are struggling or upset.
- The voice of young people is evident throughout the home. They are fully involved in choosing daily activities, menus and decor in the home. Staff encourage and facilitate many opportunities for young people's views to be sought about the care that they receive.
- There are lots of photographs around the home of recent activities and adventures that each young person has had while living at the home.
- Young people make a positive contribution to the community in which they live. They access a wide variety of community activities and services.
- Staff are proactive and thorough in all matters related to safeguarding. There are robust systems and procedures in place which they follow. They are child-focused in decision making and work effectively with others to ensure that safety is central to young people's plans.
- The manager is highly motivated and innovative in her approach. She has brought about significant positive improvement over the time that she has managed the home.
- Staff engage in regular and effective supervision and review of practice and all contribute to constructive team meetings. They access good-quality training which is relevant to their roles.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and is registered to care for up to four children with emotional and/or 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, while also providing access to therapeutic services.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/01/2016	Full	Good
11/11/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/02/2015	Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>Outstanding</p>
<p>Young people are making outstanding progress. They are developing confidence and improved self-esteem. They are learning strategies which enable them to cope and manage the experiences and difficulties that they encounter. They are developing positive life and independence skills, which are improving their future life chances, and each has benefited significantly from residing in the home. A young person said, 'My life has been tough but I'm making the most of it.' Their lives have been enhanced by living in the home. Young people have made progress in their ability to manage their behaviour and emotions, utilising lots of strategies learned in the home.</p> <p>Staff form secure, trusting and open relationships with young people. The impact of this is that young people seek guidance from staff especially when they are struggling and finding situations difficult to cope with. Staff reassure young people and collectively they explore solutions and ways to manage difficulties. Staff provide regular and meaningful one-to-one sessions offering good-quality education and advice, which prepares and supports young people for their future lives.</p> <p>Staff are knowledgeable, calm, consistent and caring in their approach to young people. They have very good insight and understanding about each young person's needs and the individual approaches needed. Staff are empathetic and caring while also providing clear boundaries and expectations for young people. Staff support each young person to communicate their needs and worries through a variety of ways. Examples of this are the worry and concern forms, questionnaires and weekly home meetings. Staff 'go the extra mile' to gain young people's views and involve them in all the decisions which are made that affect them. They seek young people's views and wishes before multi-agency meetings, ensuring that their views are heard in this process. They encourage young people to identify for themselves progress that they have made and the areas they need to develop.</p> <p>Staff follow detailed care plans that provide practical information and guidance. Staff complete regular reviews of need through the six-weekly 'network meetings'. This is a multi-disciplinary review of plans, achievements and progress which ensures that goals are reviewed and amended as required.</p> <p>The home has been settled with no new admissions since the last inspection. There is a stable core staff team. The house has a cosy feel to it, offering a variety of spaces for young people to relax. The centre of the home is the kitchen/dining area where young people and staff often gather. Young people have personalised their</p>	

bedrooms and each has invested time and thought into considering how to decorate it. Young people care and look after their bedrooms and belongings well.

Young people are engaged in full-time education. They are making very good progress within their individual abilities. All have very good attendance, with staff supporting and encouraging their daily attendance. Staff maintain very good communication with each educational setting and they attend all meetings and reviews. Staff support young people to complete homework and also offer other meaningful activities which further their education skills.

Staff support each young person to address their physical and emotional health needs including through accessing community medical services. Staff have referred and gained additional advice and guidance for young people when needed. Young people access the therapy service linked to the home. This has enabled young people to work through some very challenging experiences and trauma. Young people have made outstanding progress in their abilities to manage their emotions, learning positive ways to self-regulate behaviour and maintain their well-being. Young people are addressing longer-standing healthcare concerns. Staff support young people to lead healthy lifestyles. They are currently focusing on encouraging and educating young people about the benefits of healthy eating and exercise.

Young people are supported to follow their interests and hobbies. They enjoy the busy schedule of daily activities in the home. Each young person is encouraged to have a protected activity. These include youth clubs, horse riding, music, walking and swimming. Young people assist with basic chores in the home. They clear the table, assist with meal preparation and help with the washing up after the main meal. Each young person has learned new skills while living at the home and they are becoming more independent.

Staff provide fantastic support, preparing young people for moving on from the home. This has included visiting and exploring housing options and new placements. Young people have learned many practical skills including 'what to do if I burn myself', budgeting, how to occupy myself and menu planning. Young people have been fully engaged and involved in making choices about their transitions. Staff and young people are planning parties to celebrate their moving on from the home. Staff are involved in the post-home plan and will remain key people in young people's support networks.

Staff follow detailed contact plans which ensure that contact between young people and their families is well managed. 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.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Staff have a rigorous approach to safeguarding, with up-to-date knowledge and understanding of risk factors and how to keep young people safe. The safety and well-being of young people is high on the agenda within the home. Safeguarding policies and procedures are well understood by staff. Concerns are clearly recorded and referrals are made to the relevant agencies when needed. Staff follow robust, effective systems to report, refer and act on concerns. Managers have thorough systems for monitoring and reviewing concerns, ensuring that matters are acted on swiftly with outcomes recorded.</p> <p>Young people say that they feel safe and secure and each has a trusted adult who they can confide in, and seek support from, when needed. Staff provide good-quality advice and education about the impact of risk-taking behaviours. Young people are supported to take age-appropriate risks in an assessed, considered manner. Staff have explored with young people the risks associated with smoking, stranger danger and accessing the internet.</p> <p>There have been no episodes of going missing from the home since the previous inspection. Staff have good knowledge and understanding of what is required if an incident were to occur. Detailed going missing plans and protocols are in place. Plans include timescales and required actions to follow. Staff work collaboratively with statutory agencies in the formulation and review of these plans.</p> <p>Young people are encouraged to share their views about the home. Their complaints have been swiftly responded to in line with the home's policy and procedure. Records evidence that young people have been provided with an outcome to their complaint. Complaints from other interested parties are equally well managed.</p> <p>There have been no allegations made against staff since the last inspection. Staff have a good understanding of the whistleblowing policy.</p> <p>Risk assessments are thorough and detailed, exploring all known risk factors. Plans and assessments are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current risks and actions required to minimise them.</p> <p>Staff and young people have good relationships with police officers. Young people recently invited officers to the home to talk to them about their role. The police officers used this opportunity to offer advice and guidance to young people about how to keep safe in the community.</p> <p>Staff support young people to address and work through any conflicts with each</p>	

other, seeking solutions and rebuilding relationships when needed.

Staff are trained in the home's preferred method of behaviour management. Staff are proactive and utilise a wide variety of strategies and techniques effectively. Staff complete detailed records for incidents that have occurred. There has been no physical intervention used in the home since the last inspection. Managers monitor and review incidents thoroughly. Young people are learning positive ways to manage and self-regulate their feelings and emotions. They are talking to staff about their worries and concerns and choosing to use learned strategies such as having a bath or going for a walk to help them contain and manage their feelings and emotions.

Staff celebrate young people's achievements, giving many more rewards than sanctions. When a sanction has been given, young people are offered a debrief to explore their views about it. Sanctions used have been proportionate.

Staff use a robust system for managing and administering medication.

Managers follow effective safer recruitment processes. They are developing their systems to ensure that when gaps in employment history are explored the information and detail is clear within the records.

The environment is well maintained and safe.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
<p>The home is being well managed by an inspirational and motivated manager. The new manager was registered in November 2016 after arriving at the home earlier that year. She is currently working towards achieving her level 5 award in residential childcare. There have been significant positive changes in the home in her period of time in charge.</p> <p>The manager has very good knowledge and understanding of each young person. She has developed very positive relationships with each young person. She has supported and encouraged young people to make positive decisions which are having a significant impact on their lives.</p> <p>The home's development plan provides clarity about the strengths and weaknesses of the home, with actions identified to improve and develop areas further. The manager utilises a variety of monitoring systems, which ensure that she has a current view and understanding about the impact of care provided in the home. She has sought the views of others through questionnaires and involved stakeholders in key decisions about aspects of the home. The independent visitor's</p>	

reports are utilised to further drive improvement in the home.

Staff are very well supported through regular and effective supervision and their practice is appraised. The weekly team meetings and a four weekly in-house multi-disciplinary review of those in their care have a positive impact on staff practice. Staff are developing their knowledge and understanding about the underlying reasons for young people's behaviour. They are gaining insight about the impact of their needs and experiences and this enables staff to have a fuller understanding about this. Staff develop consistent approaches to support young people whoever is on shift.

Staff are positive, caring and nurturing towards young people. Staff report feeling well supported by the house manager and leaders in the organisation.

Staff access a wide variety of good-quality training specific to their roles. Staff are enrolled on the required level 3 qualification or already possess it. The workforce development plan details further training and skills development for senior staff, preparing them for leadership roles within the home.

Staff who are new to the home complete a thorough induction and probation period over six months, which includes training, shadowing and review of practice.

Leaders and managers have developed effective and good-quality relationships with those outside of the home. This has been sustained through regular communication and contact. They continue to develop relationships with families, professionals, voluntary services and those in the community. The regular network meetings help to sustain this effective multi-disciplinary approach.

Managers have implemented and acted on the previous recommendations and requirements set.

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 looked after children 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 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 who 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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