

1249111

Registered provider: Serenity Care Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and run by a private organisation. The staff at this home care for up to four children with attachment, behavioral, emotional, and social needs because of their childhood experiences.

The home has been without a registered manager since April 2020.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 July 2021

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: 18 May 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/05/2021	Full	Inadequate
30/04/2019	Full	Good
02/05/2018	Full	Good
15/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff at this home are currently providing care for one child. Since the last inspection, another child has also lived in the home. Therefore, this report will refer to the child and the children.

The child said that the best thing about the home was the staff. Staff develop positive relationships with the children and respond to them with respect and acceptance. This leads to a relaxed atmosphere in the home where the children turn to the staff for support and enjoy their company.

Staff work closely with the child and they have frequent, purposeful conversations. Direct work is structured to meet the child's individual needs and provides a safe space for her to discuss any issues or worries that she may have. This helps the staff to know how to support the child to develop her independence at a pace that is right for her.

Children are encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles through a balanced diet and taking part in a varied range of physical activities. The staff's support, understanding and encouragement has been effective in helping the child to make rapid progress in her physical health and emotional development.

Feedback from children's paediatric services and the social worker is extremely positive with regard to how the staff have helped the child to feel settled in the home and to make progress. A huge achievement for the child is that she has returned to mainstream school since living at the home.

Staff ensure that the child has access to specialist services that help her. Staff seek additional advice and guidance from these services, if and when required. Consequently, the child receives holistic help to meet her individual needs.

Staff help to arrange and assist the children with family visits and contact arrangements. The children are encouraged to build memory books that include pictures and special mementoes. These measures help the children to stay connected and maintain important relationships. Staff recognise that this is especially important for the children that live far away from their families.

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

The structure and routines in the home provide the child with a feeling of safety. Staff have clear expectations and set appropriate boundaries that are warm and supportive. This assists the child to understand acceptable boundaries.

Staff show a good understanding of safeguarding and know what to do if they are worried about a child. Managers and the staff are aware of their responsibilities to

report child protection concerns that they consider to be serious to the safeguarding agencies, including Ofsted, without delay. Staff plan and take timely steps to reduce risks for the children.

Managers and the staff carefully consider and plan for the children's moves to the home and from the home. Managers are aware of the importance of only accepting children when they are satisfied that they can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. Transitional planning shows that the staff and the managers consider the impact that a new child may have on other children living in the home.

The registered individual and managers ensure that staff are provided with opportunities to develop their practice through a broad range of training resources. While most of the training has transferred online because of the COVID-19 pandemic, plans are in place for face-to-face training to commence soon, such as first-aid training.

Staff have all completed mandatory training, including safeguarding. However, a sub-contractor maintenance worker who regularly works at the home has not received safeguarding training. This means that he may not be equipped to know how to respond to a safeguarding concern. Plans are in place to address this.

The home sits by a busy main road. Risks in the immediate area are assessed and mitigated. However, the location risk assessment does not contain local agency intelligence. For example, it does not contain known areas where risks are present or any emerging worries about children in the local community being targeted for sexual exploitation or being drawn into gang crime. This could result in the staff not being fully aware of risks to the children in the wider community.

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

There has been no registered manager at the home since April 2020. This has led to a significant period where there has been no accountable person in day-to-day charge of the running of the home. The current manager has submitted her application to register with Ofsted.

Managers have strong links with partner agencies to ensure that children's needs are well met. Managers and the staff ensure that families and social workers are informed of any changes in the children's presentation or needs, and they seek out the appropriate support at these times. Leaders and managers actively advocate on behalf of the children and challenge decisions that they consider to be not in the children's best interest.

With the support of the deputy manager, the manager closely monitors the day-to-day quality of care in the home. New improved monitoring systems have helped to strengthen their oversight. Staff said that they feel well supported and always have someone to turn to for advice.

The manager ensures that the staff receive regular, child-focussed and developmental supervision. However, this could be strengthened to ensure that there is a specific focus on safeguarding matters. Similarly, team meetings do not routinely consider safeguarding. This means that the staff may not always be encouraged, or tested, to further develop their safeguarding skills and knowledge.

Leaders and the manager operate a safer recruitment policy. However, there was no Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate in place for a sub-contractor who regularly undertakes maintenance at the home. This could potentially place the children at risk. This was addressed during the inspection.

Improvements have been made in the home that have led to improved fire-safety practice, more focused care planning, and enhancements to the physical environment for the children. Any limitations placed on a child's privacy or freedom are balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe.

The home has closed-circuit television (CCTV) systems. These are sited in communal areas of the home and can be activated depending on the needs of the children. While the cameras are not currently in use, the presence of cameras in the home has the potential for a child to feel that they are being watched. This leads to an institutional feel in the home.

Overall, the children enjoy a child-centred and warm environment. The responsible individual has ensured considerable investment in repairing damage and maintaining the environment for the children. However, the standard of maintenance at the home remains too variable and repairs are not always completed quickly. Refurbishment plans are in place and remain ongoing.

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
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12 (2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2)) This is a repeat requirement.	04 September 2021
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d)) In particular, the registered manager must ensure that any contractor who is regularly working at the home has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. This is a repeat requirement.	04 September 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguard children and minimise potential risks to them. In particular, the manager and leaders must ensure that all staff that work in the home, including regular sub-contractors, receive safeguarding training. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that the staff hold the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a child is in any way at risk of harm. In particular, ensure that all opportunities are used to explore and develop the staff's knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and the expected responses to concerns. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)
- The registered person must ensure that the children's homes is a nurturing and supportive environment that meet the needs of the children, and in, most cases, be a homely, domestic environment. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. In particular, ensure that the home environment is consistently maintained to a high standard and damage is repaired quickly. In addition, update the children's guide to reflect that the CCTV is not operating. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: 1249111

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Serenity Care Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Conkers Cottage, Brockhills Farm, Sway Road,
Tiptoe, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 6FQ

Responsible individual: Deborah Lymbery

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Anne-Marie Davies, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021