

SC020193

Registered provider: The SENAD Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The provision is an independent day and residential school for up to 25 children and young people aged eight to 19 years who have severe learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorder and associated challenging behaviour. The registered manager has recently resigned his post with no successor identified. However, appropriate interim management arrangements have been put in place until a suitable manager is recruited.

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 June 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 18 April 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Compliance notices were issued at the last inspection. The compliance notices have not been met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/04/2018	Full	Inadequate
26/09/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/08/2017	Full	Inadequate
21/03/2017	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(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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(vi))	24/07/2018
*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) and (2)(h))	24/07/2018
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) and (2)(d))	24/07/2018
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as	24/07/2018

recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(b)(iv))	
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* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

The day to day experience of children is inadequate because there are not enough staff to meet children's identified needs. At times, the safety and dignity of children is compromised due to poor staff deployment. This situation has not improved since the last inspection, six weeks ago. Children's activities continue to be cancelled because there are not always enough staff to take children out into the community.

Staff feel disempowered to make sensible decisions about the care and welfare of children. For example, one child could not access the garden because staff believed they required a second member of staff to take him into the garden. This meant a very lively child unnecessarily spent a sunny evening inside.

Staff do not have all the information that they need to provide a good level of care to children. This means that a child has not been prepared well for a major event in his life.

Children make progress. In most cases, they learn how to manage their own behaviour and incidents generally reduce. This allows them to better access education and enables them to learn. They also learn independent living skills that help them to move into adulthood successfully.

Children also make progress in communicating with others. A social worker said: 'He is more talkative now. He will give his opinions on things.' This also impacts on their behaviour as frustration is reduced. Staff communicate well with children, using the child's preferred form of communication, such as sign language.

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

A serious safeguarding concern was not reported to the child's social worker. This means that the social worker was unable to take effective action to help reduce risks to the child.

There continue to be failures to report, or significant delays in reporting, safeguarding concerns. Inspectors were given several examples by staff of potential safeguarding concerns that have not been reported. These include a child being given a drink that was too hot for him and staff telling a child who is a 'chatterbox' to 'shut up'.

Staff are not empowered to make decisions. This can lead to poor outcomes when situations change. For example, a young adult's dignity was not upheld because she became very distressed in a public place. This was because staff would not allow her to

have a burger. Staff had been instructed that the young adult is on a diet but still took her to a fast food restaurant.

Following a serious incident, during which a child's arm was allegedly trapped in a door by a member of staff, staff witnesses provided different accounts. The home is investigating the possibility that a member of staff has provided a false account of the incident.

Action taken in response to safeguarding concerns is not always recorded. This hinders the ability of managers and safeguarding agencies to evaluate practice. Furthermore, recording of incidents is not clear enough to enable managers to monitor staff actions effectively.

More staff have been trained to an advanced level in safeguarding. A safeguarding team meets regularly to review safeguarding incidents. This is a positive change. Currently, minutes of these meetings are not taken. It is therefore difficult to get an understanding of the team's effectiveness.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The management team has failed to monitor staffing levels and safeguarding concerns effectively.

The registered manager has resigned since the last inspection. A permanent manager has not yet been appointed but an interim manager has been appointed. Although very experienced, she has previously managed adult services and not children's homes. She has introduced a number of new systems that are not yet embedded into practice. These include systems to ensure that safe staffing levels are maintained at all times. However, staff recalled a recent incident when unsafe staffing levels placed children and staff in an unsafe situation for a short period.

The interim manager has not taken the time to get to know the children or staff. This would not only be an effective monitoring tool but also help to bridge gaps in her knowledge and allow children and staff to get to know her.

The management team has not developed robust plans to address aggression and violence between children. For example, a child had his leg stamped on by another child repeatedly before staff intervened.

The rota does not allow for flexibility. This means that, on occasion, there are not enough staff on duty to meet the assessed needs of the children. Children, therefore, do not always go on their planned activities into the community.

Risk assessments are vague about staffing levels for individual children. This leads to confusion for staff. Risk assessments do not match funding agreements with placing authorities. This means children may not go on planned activities or be put at risk due to staffing levels being incorrect.

Planning for children's activities is weak and means children may feel frustration when activities are cancelled. A child's planned holiday was delayed because of the strict implementation of a staffing policy regarding overtime. Furthermore, managers then planned for the child to attend another holiday that was unsuitable in terms of staffing and the other child already going. A senior member of staff realised this on the day the child was supposed to leave and delayed the child's holiday again.

Some staff say that they are not listened to or valued. They feel unable to challenge decisions. Others welcome recent changes and feel that staff morale has improved. All staff agree that they would like the interim manager to spend time in the houses with the children.

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 differences 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: SC020193

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: The SENAD Group Limited

Registered provider address: 1 St Georges House, Vernon Gate, Derby DE1 1UQ

Responsible individual: Mark Flynn

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector(s)

Joanne Vyas, social care inspector
Davinia Lawton, social care inspector

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