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Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	01/06/2015
Unique reference number	SC358046
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Residential special school
Registered person	The Senad Group Limited
Registered person address	Senad Group Ltd, 1 St. Georges House, Vernon Gate, DERBY, DE1 1UQ

Responsible individual	Dr Mark Flynn
Registered manager	Mrs Karen Tatham
Inspectors	Miss Rachel Griffiths and Mr Michael Mulvaney

Inspection date	01/06/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Improved Effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC358046

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people make good progress across all areas of their welfare and development.
- Young people enjoy good relationships with staff and speak positively about their experiences of living in the home. Staff are committed and caring and provide young people with structure and routine and high levels of encouragement and praise.
- The multi-disciplinary approach to each young person's care is a particular strength of the home. On-site expertise and cohesive working practices ensures that young people have highly individualised care plans and packages of support that meet their individual complex needs.
- Safeguarding practices are good and young people are kept safe.
- The Registered Manager provides strong and enthusiastic leadership. She is very child-focused and has high aspirations for young people. Staff feel valued and share the manager's vision to continually improve the lives of young people.
- Some shortfalls are identified as a result of this inspection. These are in relation to consultation with parents, monitoring systems and minor omissions in the Statement of Purpose. None of these shortfalls are having an impact on the safety and well-being of young people.

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 meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must: 2(g)(ii) demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received, with particular reference to feedback from parents 2(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home and ensure that every significant incident receives appropriate management scrutiny	04/08/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review and amend the Statement of Purpose to clarify the criteria for admissions to the home (The Guide to Children's Homes Regulations paragraph 3.5 page 14)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This privately run service is registered as a children's home which is part of a residential school. It provides care and accommodation for up to 38 young people with autism, Asperger's syndrome and communication difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/01/2015	CH - Interim	Improved effectiveness
25/06/2014	CH - Full	Good
25/02/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Young people's experiences and overall progress are good. A parent commented: 'My son boarding has had an immensely positive impact on his life.' A young person said: 'Since living here, I have learnt lots of things. I have learnt to wash my own hair, I have learnt how to cope with people who annoy me and I have learnt what banter is. I am proud of what I have learnt.' Young people grow in confidence and develop improved life and social skills. As a result, their life chances are significantly enhanced. Despite experiencing a level of disruption recently as a result of recent staff turnover, young people continue to enjoy good relationships with a core group of committed staff who know them well. A young person said: 'I get on well with my key carer and can talk to them about anything.' The positive relationships young people have with staff help to provide a secure emotional base from where young people can develop. All young people are engaging in full time education and all have made progress from their starting points. For some young people, who have particularly complex emotional and mental health difficulties, good multi-agency support ensures that they receive the right therapeutic and specialist support to help them address their individual difficulties. An integrated 24-hour curriculum helps young people to reach their full potential in all aspects of their development. Young people make significant progress in relation to their physical and emotional health. A young person commented: 'I feel so much healthier now. When I first came I did not eat many different foods, I do now though and have my own menu. I choose what I want and I have a much healthier diet.' A co-ordinated approach from in-house experts, including speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, a psychotherapist and a dedicated health promotion team, working with care and education professionals, ensures that young people have the opportunity to thrive physically and emotionally. Staff support young people to develop their communication and social skills. Young people participate in a variety of activities in the local community, such as swimming, horse-riding, dance clubs and skating. A parent said: 'My son is getting the social education he needs. It has really helped him to develop in confidence and he has benefitted massively as a result. Young people have fun, they make friends, and they are given the opportunity to become a part of their community.	

Staff help young people to develop important life skills. A parent commented: 'My son has made progress in his ability to accept what is going on in life, to accept change and to accept other points of view.' In addition, young people learn to travel independently, learn to meet their own personal care needs and learn to cook basic meals. Improved life skills help to prepare young people for when it is time for them to move on to the next stage of their lives.

Young people's views are respected and valued. They know how to make a complaint. Their views are regularly sought regarding the day-day-day running of the home during young people's meetings and during weekly one-to-one welfare discussions held with young people. Young people are also routinely consulted when their care plans are formulated and reviewed. Good communication and consultation impacts positively on young people. They feel listened to and this helps raise their self-esteem and confidence.

Young people's bedrooms are comfortable and personalised. A programme of refurbishment is well underway to make communal areas more homely and welcoming. Young people have been fully consulted in relation to the refurbishment and have chosen colour schemes and soft furnishings. This involvement helps young people to develop a sense of pride in their home environment as well making it feel more like home to them.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Staff are well trained in respect of safeguarding practices and work in accordance with the home's safeguarding policies. They demonstrate a good understanding of what to do should a safeguarding situation arise and a good understanding of the home's whistle blowing procedures. This helps to increase levels of safety in the home. Young people have a good sense of safety. A young person said: 'When I first came to live here I was scared. Now I have made friends and have got to know the staff. It is a safe place to live and there are people here I can talk too.' The positive and trusting relationships young people have made with staff and their peers have helped to create an emotionally safe and secure environment for young people.	

The protection of young people is supported by detailed risk assessments which are regularly reviewed by staff. Staff undertake direct work with young people to discuss areas of vulnerability and risky behaviours such as self-harm and aggressive behaviours with the aim of improving young people's safety. This, as well as close working relationships and regular multi-professional meetings to monitor and review the progress young people are making in relation to their specific difficulties, ensures that risk management plans remain effective and consistently implemented. As a result, young people receive comprehensive and consistent help.

Young people very rarely go missing from the home with no recent incidents. Up to date policies and procedures ensure that should this become an issue in the future, staff understand what actions to take to safeguard young people in this area.

Medication administration and storage procedures are good. Medication is stored securely. Only trained staff complete a robust regime of medication administration. Recording is detailed and regularly audited. Young people are thus safeguarded from the risk of mistakes being made in the administration of medication.

Behaviour is well managed in the home. Each young person has an individualised behaviour management plan. Plans clearly detail individual triggers to behaviours and positive strategies for staff to follow in order to help and support young people. Reward systems are effective. The use of sanctions and physical intervention are low. There have only been seven sanctions and two physical interventions since the last inspection. Recording is detailed and reviewed by a manager. The analysis of the effectiveness of physical interventions and sanctions by the management team ensures practice in this area remains good.

The company has a robust recruitment and selection procedure. Staff have been recruited and checked appropriately. This ensures that only those people who are suitable to work with young people and do not pose a risk to their safety are employed.

The home is a physically safe and secure environment. All health and safety issues are addressed. Fire drills are regularly undertaken at different times of the day and night. This contributes to young people's safety and well-being.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The Registered Manager is suitably experienced and qualified. She is committed to high standards of care and leads by example. Her enthusiasm filters down to the	

staff team. Despite staff currently being under pressure as a result of a number of vacancies, morale amongst the staff team remains high. A cohesive and experienced core staff team continue to ensure that young people are consistently well supported. Recruitment is ongoing to compliment and support the existing staff team.

Staff feel very well supported by the management team. A member of staff said: 'All of the managers are really approachable, I feel well supported, I have regular supervision and I feel valued as a member of staff. Managers praise me for the good work I do but always point out my areas for development. There is always more to learn.' Regular good quality supervision, in addition to regular staff meetings and consultations with a number of specialist professionals who work within the organisation ensures that practice is monitored. It also helps identify how care can be further improved.

Staff undertake a comprehensive programme of training which covers mandatory and specialist areas in relation to the young people that they are caring for. As a consequence of good quality training and support, young people benefit from care provided to them by skilled staff who are equipped to meet their complex individual needs.

The Registered Manager is very reflective and child-focused. She has high aspirations for young people and is eager to continually improve the quality of care and experiences young people have. She recognises the strengths and weaknesses within the home. These are reflected in the homes recently updated development plan.

Improvement is further promoted by internal and external quality assurance systems. Strength's and minor shortfalls are identified and promptly addressed.

The management team take complaints seriously and respond to both formal and informal complaints promptly. However, proactive systems for seeking and then recording feedback about the experiences of young people are limited. Some parents express dissatisfaction with the level and consistency of communication they have with managers and staff. Some query whether their views are consistently heard or acted upon. While there is no evidence that this is impacting on the welfare of young people at this time, insufficient attention to feedback has the potential to impede improvements to all aspects of the service.

Systems used by the management team to monitor and review the progress young people make are robust. Data is collected and an auditing tool is used to monitor and evaluate patterns and trends in behaviours and the progress young people are making in all areas of their development. Care plans and risk assessments are reviewed and updated accordingly. This ensures that support is targeted to meet young people's needs as they get older and change.

A shortfall in relation to the management monitoring of one significant incident has been identified. While it was established during the inspection that this was a recording, rather than a safeguarding issue, and no young person's safety or welfare was jeopardised, management oversight and evaluation was poor on this one occasion. Poor recording and a lack of thorough management oversight of all significant incidents that occur has the potential to impact on the quality of care provided and the potential for practice to improve.

Overall, the home fulfils its commitment to young people as outlined in the recently updated Statement of Purpose. It provides good information about the care and services the home offers. An amendment to the document is needed however to provide clarity for parents and placing authorities in relation to the home's admission criteria.

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 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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