

SC478315

Registered provider: The Serendipity Centre Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is one of three registered children's homes operated by this private provider. It provides care for up to four children.

At the time of this inspection, one child was living in the home.

The manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 December 2024

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: 6 September 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/09/2023	Full	Outstanding
16/08/2022	Full	Good
22/07/2021	Full	Good
08/01/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have strong relationships with staff, and they are confident that staff listen to them and value their views. One child wrote a heartwarming welcoming letter to a new child describing the positive relationship that they have with staff. Equally, staff talk about children in an emotionally warm and caring way. Interactions between them are friendly and nurturing.

Children are helped by staff to keep in touch with their family, regardless of the distance involved. One child can now spend time with their family and friends due to the positive progress they have made since living at the home.

Children experience a wide range of activities in the home and local community. Some children enjoyed a summer holiday abroad, and photos of these memories are displayed throughout the home. Staff further enhance children's interests and develop their confidence through participating in a wide range of socially and emotionally stimulating activities. These include horse riding, aerial dancing and visiting local beaches. One child is interested in hair and beauty, and the home has a room that is decorated as a salon with professional equipment to support the child's interest.

Children attend school in the local community. Staff work closely with teachers to ensure that children achieve the best possible educational outcomes. When children are not accessing full-time education, staff and the managers are proactive in working with relevant professionals to ensure that all options are fully considered to try and support children back to education. As a result, children make good progress in relation to their education.

Staff actively promote children's health needs. Children are supported to learn independence skills in readiness for the next stage of their development. This includes teaching and guiding children to budget and cook healthy meals. Joint working with children's parents and social workers is a strength of managers and staff.

There have been mixed outcomes in terms of the experiences of children leaving the home since the last inspection. Staff supported two children to successfully return to their parents' care and these children experienced positive outcomes from their time at the home. However, one child moved into the home without full consideration as to whether staff could meet their needs or whether their needs would be compatible with the other children already living in the home. As a result, children experienced some difficult incidents and this child moved on from the home abruptly and in an unplanned way.

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

Children have trusting relationships with staff and reach out to them for help when they have worries or concerns. They say that staff listen to them and take their concerns seriously and respond appropriately. Staff are knowledgeable about the children's risks and vulnerabilities and know how to respond to safeguarding concerns.

Staff have successfully negotiated a difficult period when the home was unsettled. This occurred following the departure of the registered manager, a change to interim management arrangements and following a decision to move a child into the home whose needs were not carefully assessed before they moved in.

When children go missing from the home, there are protocols and safety plans in place for staff to follow. These are agreed with children's social workers. Staff liaise effectively with the police when necessary and do all they can to locate the child and ensure that they safely return home. Staff have been particularly effective in working with parents to support children be safer in the community and to reduce incidents of going missing from the home.

Staff make good use of therapeutic group meetings and use these to reflect on their practice and to identify how they can work together and progress the children's plans. Staff work effectively with external agencies when there are any worries about the children's welfare.

Staff understand children's experiences and respond with appropriate boundaries about what is safe and acceptable. They understand the need to keep children safe and to allow them to take appropriate risks. For example, one child, who was at risk in the community, is now able to spend free time with friends and family members in the community.

Generally, allegations against staff or concerns about staff practice are well managed. However, on one occasion, leaders did not notify Ofsted about a serious incident that was investigated internally. Furthermore, the process of when consultation with external professionals would be initiated is not clear. As a result, the regulator was unable to have oversight of what had occurred.

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

There have been significant changes to the management and staff team since the last inspection. The registered manager left the home and several staff left soon after. The experienced deputy manager for the home was appointed as the new manager and they have applied to register with Ofsted. A new deputy manager has also been appointed. This has helped to ensure some consistency for children and staff following the departure of the registered manager.

The manager and deputy manager know the strengths and weaknesses of the home and are reflective when things do not go to plan.

For a period, the newly appointed manager needed to be absent from the home. Leaders made the decision for a deputy manager from another home in the organisation to step into the role of interim manager during this time. However, the interim manager was inexperienced in this role, and leaders did not have sufficient oversight of the decisions being made. This resulted in a new child moving into the home without there being clear plans in place to meet the needs and risks of the child effectively.

Staff were not fully informed of the new child's previous experiences, the support that they would need to provide to the child, and records were inconsistent. This resulted in an unsettled time in the home that increased risks for children. Following a serious incident, the new child's time at the home ended.

Following the return of the newly appointed manager, learning has been identified from the time that they were absent. Leaders have reviewed the management decisions that were made during this period and have taken some action to address them. This includes team discussions and clinical reflection with the provider's therapist. This has helped staff to reflect and consider what occurred and what can be done differently. Of significance is that, during this period, staff felt disempowered to challenge some management decisions. This resulted in a child gaining access to items that could cause harm.

Overall, staff feel supported by the current management team. They take pride in their work and are proud of the progress made by children. Staff benefit from regular and effective supervision sessions. They are confident in their roles and receive relevant training. Staff say that they are fully supported by the manager and deputy manager in the home.

Leaders have not ensured that significant events and incidents are notified to Ofsted. This has hindered the regulator's oversight of the service. Furthermore, the independent visitor has not always been aware of these incidents.

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, The 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— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(vi)(vii)(b))	10 February 2025
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—	10 February 2025

lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(e)(h))	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority; that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(c))	10 February 2025
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—	10 February 2025

a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;

an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;

there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there.

A notification made under this regulation—

must include details of—

the matter;

the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and

any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter;

must be made or confirmed in writing.

(Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))

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: SC478315

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Serendipity Centre Limited

Registered provider address: 1st Floor, Goodlands House, St Lukes Close, Hedge End, Southampton SO30 2US

Responsible individual: Sean Maguinness

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Shaheda Dhandia, Social Care Inspector

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