

# SC404596

Registered provider: The Senad Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This privately owned service forms part of a residential school. It is registered to provide accommodation for up to 56 young people who have communication difficulties or are diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder. Young people are aged 15 years and older. There are two homes that are registered under the same provision; one currently provides residential care for a maximum of 20 young people and the other for 11 young people in a local town centre.

**Inspection dates:** 30 to 31 October 2017

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **outstanding**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

**Date of last inspection:** 29 March 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:**

None

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- Young people enjoy the experiences and opportunities that this home provides.
- Young people benefit greatly from the nurturing and trusting relationships they have with staff.
- Young people make exceptional progress in their education, confidence, self-esteem, emotional health and independent living skills.
- Young people are prepared very well for independent living.
- Young people are empowered to make decisions and choices in all aspects of their lives.
- Young people have access to a wide range of activities in the home and in the local and wider community.
- Staff ensure that young people are kept safe but they are not risk-averse.
- Staff are passionate about providing a high-quality service for young people.
- The registered manager is experienced and provides strong and supportive leadership. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the service. She has good plans in place to further develop the home and address any identified shortfalls. She continuously strives to improve the service for young people.

The children's home's areas for development:

- On one occasion, staff were not thorough enough in the action they took to ensure the well-being of a young person. This shortfall was not identified by the management team when the incident was reviewed.
- Some staff are not knowledgeable about healthcare conditions that young people manage independently.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
12/07/2016	Full	Outstanding
28/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
06/07/2015	Full	Good

## 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
<p>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))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that medical attention is sought when a young person states that they have taken medication that is either not prescribed for them or is more than they should be taking.</p>	<p>30/11/2017</p>

### Recommendations

- Ensure that the child receives care which meets each child's needs and promotes their welfare, taking into account of the child's gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, sexual identity, mental health, any disability, their assessed needs, previous experiences and any relevant plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2)
- The registered person should make best use of information from internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people make exceptional progress at this home. They like living at the home and have strong, trusting relationships with staff. They also make good friendships with other young people living in the home and in the local community. A parent made the following comment: 'Fantastic, supportive environment in which my child has made good progress.'

Preparing young people to be independent is a strength of this home. A member of staff said: 'Young people need to be empowered. We want them to make their own decisions.' Young people are helped by using a step-by-step approach to independent travel on public transport. They readily catch the bus or get onto a train. One young person was cared for on a one-to-one basis for health reasons when he first arrived. Now he can travel independently and does so regularly. Depending on their risk assessments, most young people manage their own medication. Some are also able to manage their complex healthcare needs independently. Young people cook, shop and carry out household tasks. They are confident and regularly access the local and wider community independently. They will happily talk to visitors to the home about their experiences. An example of this is young people contributing to the Lenehan review.

Staff continually encourage young people to make their own decisions. A member of staff said: 'Young people are supported and empowered to have a voice and have a say about how their care is provided. They feel very confident about coming to us with any issues and asking for help.' For example, a young person recently wrote to the registered manager querying why the home is a nut-free zone when no one in the home is allergic to nuts. This point has been taken seriously and the home's status as a nut-free zone is being reviewed.

Young people know that they can talk to staff if they are unhappy about anything. The complaints procedure is accessible. Additionally, an independent advocate visits the young people. They know the advocate and how to contact her if they wish to speak to her.

Some young people have complex physical health needs. These are managed very well by the young people themselves or with the support of staff. However, in some cases, staff are not knowledgeable about the healthcare conditions that young people have. This is because the young people are completely independent in managing their own conditions and staff want to respect their privacy and independence. Nevertheless, staff should have an understanding of these conditions so that they know what to look for if the young person's condition deteriorates.

Young people who have emotional and psychiatric conditions are very well supported by the staff team as well as the therapeutic team. Young people also have access to child and adolescent mental health services.

Young people make exceptional progress in their educational attendance and achievement. Young people who have not been in school for a long period of time are now attending school. Some young people are accessing other colleges to promote choice, inclusion and friendship groups. Staff track young people's destinations once they leave this school. When young people leave this school, they progress to further or higher education, employment or training. The education, care and therapy teams work closely together to provide a holistic approach to care and education.

Young people enjoy a wide range of activities. They have access to a wealth of resources within the home and school. For example, they have an indoor swimming pool, a gym, an art room and large outdoor spaces where they can walk or sit and relax. Young people living at the town centre site have access to everything a town offers. They enjoy going to the gym, the coffee shop, the cinema and so on. They also enjoy horse-riding, music, various clubs and meeting up with friends from school.

The home provides comfortable, spacious accommodation. Most bedrooms are en suite and highly personalised. Some bedrooms are more like bedsits. The home is furnished to a high standard. Young people's artwork and photographs adorn the walls. One home is set in a town centre and the other is attached to the school, and set in the countryside in its own grounds.

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

A young person said that they feel safer than they did before coming to this home. Staff have a good understanding of the home's safeguarding procedures. They are not risk-averse but know how to keep young people safe. For example, staffing levels have been reduced for some young people after reviewing the risks within a multi-agency forum. This enables young people to become more independent.

Young people are generally well behaved. No incidents of physical intervention have been used. On occasion, staff have used prescribed medication to help a young person calm when they have become very anxious. This decision has been made after using a range of de-escalation techniques, including a weighted blanket and fiddle toy. The medication has been very successful, but on many other occasions, the de-escalation techniques have also worked well without the need to use medication.

Young people do not go missing from this home. They feel safe and secure. Nevertheless, staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow should young people go missing.

Staff manage situations well when young people self-harm. They have a good understanding of why young people self-harm and they help to reduce incidents. Additionally, young people with eating disorders are also helped to manage their condition.

On one occasion, staff were not thorough enough in the action they took to ensure the well-being of a young person. Staff found empty medicine containers in a young person's room. The young person said that she had taken the medicine, which was not prescribed for her. Details about the dosage, and how many tablets were missing from the blister strips, are not clear on the records following the incident. Although the young person presented as being well at the time when the medicine was found, on this occasion, staff did not seek medical attention to ensure the young person's well-being. The incident was reported appropriately to the designated safeguarding lead, parents and social worker. Staff discussed with the parents how to keep medicines at home safer. The designated safeguarding lead reviewed the incident with other managers and the concern was closed. Neither the safeguarding lead nor managers identified the lack of medical attention as a concern. However, the young person suffered no ill effects on this occasion.

Vetting procedures help to protect young people from unsuitable adults. A Disclosure and Barring Service certificate and references are sought and received prior to a new member of staff commencing their post. Employment history is checked and any gaps are explored. Young people are also protected from harm by strong health and safety procedures, including fire safety.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The registered manager is skilled and experienced in providing strong and supportive leadership. She is experienced, and trained in recognising and managing safeguarding concerns. She is child-focused and presents as fully committed to ensuring that young people enjoy equality of access to services, facilities and experiences that will enhance their development and improve their life chances. She is part of a management team that includes the head of care and the headteacher. The management team meets regularly and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. The management team has good plans in place to further develop the home and address any identified shortfalls. Its members are reflective and implement changes according to their learning. They continuously strive to improve the service for young people.

The management team implements research-based practice. For example, staff now encourage young people to follow a routine in the evening to help them to sleep better at night. This helps them with their education and with anxiety. Furthermore, the home has been involved in providing feedback to the Lenehan review of experiences and outcomes in residential special schools and colleges.

A member of staff said: 'I feel valued and respected.' Staff feel very well supported and have access to a high-quality training programme. A member of staff said: 'The focus is on making people feel good.' Something staff respond well to is the 'Crunchie Award'. Staff nominate each other for this award if they feel that their colleague has done something well. This helps to boost staff morale and helps with staff retention. Consequently, staff retention is good. This means that young people are cared for by staff whom they know very well.

Staff are passionate about providing a high-quality service for young people. They ensure that all practice is child-centred. Parents say that they feel welcome and find the registered manager approachable. A parent said: 'This is an excellent provision which supports our son's special educational needs.' Staff work well with other professionals and with parents to ensure the health and well-being of the young people.

A member of staff said about working in this home: 'I do love it – I feel quite privileged as well. Everyone that works here cares and goes above and beyond for the young people. Nothing is ever really a problem. It is a pleasure to work here.'

## **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:** SC404596

**Provision sub-type:** Residential special school

**Registered provider:** The Senad Group Limited

**Registered provider address:** Senad Group Ltd, 1 St Georges House, Vernon Gate, Derby DE1 1UQ

**Responsible individual:** Mark Flynn

**Registered manager:** Lesley Mawbey

## Inspectors

Joanne Vyas, social care inspector

Caroline Brailsford, social care inspector



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