

SC372504

Registered provider: The SENAD Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is the residential provision of an independent special school. It provides a home for up to 39 children aged five to 19 years who may have learning disabilities, Prader-Willi syndrome or autistic spectrum disorder conditions. Children reside within one of six homes on the same site as the school.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 June 2019

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

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

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: 15 May 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/05/2018	Full	Good
21/06/2017	Full	Good
24/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/07/2016	Full	Good

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person must demonstrate every effort to achieve continuity of staffing. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 51, paragraph 10.1)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children are happy and form strong friendships with other residents. Children make significant progress towards reaching their full potential and achieving their aspirations. Children have rich and varied experiences, such as making a music album, writing a cookbook and going to Disneyland. A parent said: 'I consider myself to have very high standards and want the absolute best that is on offer for my daughter. This home meets my expectations.'

Consultation with children is embedded in the culture of the home. A recent management review of care practice clearly demonstrates that children's views have significantly shaped the day-to-day running of the home. Staff also demonstrate a strength in communicating well with children who have profound communication difficulties.

Parents are fully involved in their child's life experiences, where appropriate. For example, a parent who wanted to cook for his son came to the home and cooked for all the children so that they could all share a meal. A family was able to share in the holiday experience of their child and said: 'We wouldn't be able to take our daughter on holiday as a family, so it made it extra special that she was still able to have this experience.'

The culture of the home clearly supports the health of children. Healthcare professionals are fully involved. Staff have developed expertise in working with children with Prada Willi syndrome (PWS). Children with PWS make substantial progress in managing their condition. The quality of life for these children has significantly improved. For example, children with this condition have lost significant weight. One child has been brought back from the brink of death due to the way that staff have managed their condition.

Children feel safe and secure. Staff build warm and nurturing relationships with children. The quality of relationships between children and staff ensures that children feel loved and cherished. Strong relationships also provide reassurance to parents. One said: 'As a parent, I am sad that she is not able to live with me and that I cannot keep her safe, but the staff in that home do this for me, so I have total peace of mind.'

Children learn life skills that help them to successfully transition into adulthood. They are confident and comfortable in their surroundings. The activities that they participate in help them to challenge themselves, taking them out of their comfort zone. This means children learn new skills as well as improving their self-esteem, resilience and

confidence.

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

Children become increasingly safe due to excellent risk-management strategies. Staff and managers demonstrate a commendable understanding of the current and changing risks posed to and from children in their care. A range of dynamic risk assessments inform the care and support provided. The staff team is not risk-averse. Staff support children to take age-appropriate risks. This support includes:

- setting targets for each child: Well thought-through targets enable staff and children to have new experiences that had not previously been considered possible.
- developing risk-management plans: Effective risk management and careful planning have meant that children have been on stimulating holidays and trips. Children's disabilities and conditions had previously been a barrier to such activities.
- promoting independence: For example, one child is now able to use the kitchen with staff support. In previous placements, this was felt too risky. He is now able to make snacks and get drinks. It is no longer considered necessary to keep the kitchen door locked.

Creative strategies have led to a significant reduction in the need to use physical restraint with several children. Managers monitor this closely and have plans to further reduce the most restrictive holds by the autumn of this year.

Incidents of children going missing from care are minimal. Extremely clear and detailed missing risk assessments support staff to know what action they need to take. The designated safeguarding lead has met with local police to discuss and agree closer working relationships.

There is a strong focus on considering and addressing concerns relating to internet and social media use by children. Managers have provided training for staff and children on these areas. Some highly imaginative practices are in place to ensure the safety of children. Close partnership working is evident with placing authorities and parents and carers.

Children understand the rules of the home. They also understand their own individual behaviour management plans. Children feel safe due to the diligent and child-focused support provided by staff. One child scored the home 10/10 for how well staff keep them safe and make them happy. There is excellent management monitoring of all incidents. Managers produce a range of monthly reports, which are used to inform risk assessments. Staff regularly reflect on what works well for children and make adjustments to improve behaviour management plans.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is experienced and qualified. He has an in-depth understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. He uses research to inform practice and drive forward changes that improve the lives of children. For example, he is reviewing research about alternative forms of restraint to replace restraint that occurs on the floor.

This is likely to improve the safety of children.

The registered manager takes great care to gather children's views about the service. He implements change in accordance with those views. He has an innovative management style. This encourages staff to develop and implement creative approaches that have improved the lives of children. Several recent innovations are worthy of wider dissemination.

Managers constantly strive to improve the safety of children. They have provided training to local police officers over recent months. This has enabled the police officers to develop a better understanding of children's needs and how best to respond in an emergency. Managers have also worked with children to identify their views and feelings about the home and grounds. This has led to changes being made that increase children's sense of safety. Children are fully involved in discussions and decisions about their safety and welfare.

Parents and external professionals say that staff communicate well with them. Staff value the views of parents and other professionals. This helps to provide continuity and consistency for children.

A small number of residential areas have recently been affected by a high turnover of staff. This has left some areas with less-experienced staff teams. Staff turnover has also impacted on the proportion of staff who hold the relevant qualification. Just over half the staff team is currently qualified. Other members of staff are either completing the relevant qualification or still in their probation period. However, the experienced staff are extremely knowledgeable about the children and their needs. They support new staff very well in getting to know the children. The registered manager has implemented strategies to increase retention and ensure that inexperienced staff are fully supported.

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: SC372504

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: The SENAD Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Mark Flynn

Registered manager: Matthew Cousins

Inspectors

Joanne Vyas, social care inspector

Tracy Murty, social care inspector

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