

SC358046

Registered provider: The Senad Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run service is registered as a children's home with a school on the same site. The home provides care and accommodation for up to 32 children who have autism spectrum disorder, Asperger syndrome, acquired brain injury and communication difficulties.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 July 2019

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 good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 26 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/09/2018	Full	Outstanding
14/11/2017	Full	Outstanding
14/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
06/06/2016	Full	Outstanding

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

Recommendations

- Where the placing authority or another relevant person does not provide the input and services needed to meet a child's needs during their time in the home or in preparation for leaving the home, the home must challenge them to meet the child's needs (see regulation 5(c)). Staff should act as champions for their children, expecting nothing less than a good parent would. In particular, risk management plans should be agreed with the relevant external agency, particularly when children are high risk; education, health and care plans should be up-to-date and relevant; specialist training should be sought, prior to admission, to ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge to manage the complexities a child may present. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8)
- Staff skills for safeguarding should include being able to identify signs that children may be at risk. This is particularly regarding children who self-harm. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.10)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children are safe and happy. They enjoy their experiences at this home. A parent said: 'They put my son central to everything they do. They understand him and support him to manage his profile and enjoy life.' Children are empowered to achieve. For example, a child asked staff if he could raise money for a charity that is important to him and his family. Staff supported him and, together, they raised a significant amount of money for the charity.

Diversity is promoted and celebrated. Children feel able and supported to express their identity. Children who are transgender are listened to and their wishes are followed. Informative booklets have been produced both for children and parents, to help them have a better understanding of gender identity. In addition, an external transgender speaker provided children with a better understanding of the complexities of being transgender or trans neutral. This provided them with the confidence to discuss their identity with staff. Staff also wear rainbow lanyards to show children that they are open to discussing issues around sexuality.

Good-quality joint working between care staff, education staff, a child psychotherapist and the therapy team means that staff can provide an individually tailored programme of care for each child. Consequently, children make good progress, particularly in their education attendance and achievement, emotional health and life skills.

Houses are homely, clean and well maintained. Children have personalised their homes, including putting up their own artwork. Staff talked about 'a sense of family on the houses', which is noticeable when visiting. Strong and affectionate bonds are apparent in the way that staff speak about children and the way that children describe the staff.

Children are kept active, which helps to develop their self-esteem, confidence, sense of achievement and resilience. They participate in an abundance of activities. For example, they have recently thoroughly enjoyed trips to laser tag and to the zoo. Children also enjoy regular swimming activities and walks in the countryside. Children recently helped to plan and run a successful school open day.

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

Children feel safe and secure in this home. They have warm and nurturing relationships with staff. They know they can go to staff with any concerns they have.

Risk management does not prevent children from having the same experiences and opportunities as their peers. For example, a child recently went on a skiing trip to Italy. This is something that he would not have been able to manage previously. However, with the positive support and dedication of the staff team, he thoroughly enjoyed his trip.

Risk assessments are generally very good and help to reduce risks for children. However, some risks have not been considered, such as some particular risks related to self-harming behaviour. Furthermore, it would be good practice to ensure that risk assessments are agreed by external mental health professionals for children who are involved with children's mental health services.

A positive approach is taken to helping children understand and regulate their own behaviour. This means that sanctions or physical interventions are rare. Staff regularly remind children, formally and informally, of how much pride they take in the progress that children make.

Children who self-harm are well supported. The home's multi-disciplinary team regularly discusses what works well and what doesn't work. They produce creative, proactive strategies to prevent children from going into crisis and self-harming. Staff who work with the children have received some basic training on children who self-harm. However, this took place after a child with such behaviours had been admitted. Staff carry out daily checks of bedrooms belonging to children who self-harm, but have missed some potentially harmful items. However, these items have now been removed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is qualified and very experienced. She and her management

team provide strong and supportive leadership. She has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the service, and has plans to address identified shortfalls. She aspires to continually improve the service and the outcomes for children. However, better planning for the admission of a child with complex emotional health needs might have helped this child to settle more quickly into the home.

Staff are committed, enthusiastic and highly motivated to provide a good service for children. They are either qualified or completing an appropriate qualification. They feel very well supported by each other and the management team. They regularly reflect on their practice to ensure that they continually improve the way they help and support children.

Staff have access to good information about children. They are informed by generally good, up-to-date and relevant education, health and care plans from the placing authority. However, one such plan is old and irrelevant. The placing authority has been asked for an up-to-date plan on several occasions, but it has not been forthcoming. Managers have not escalated this concern to ensure that staff have relevant information about the child. However, managers have created their own plan that is very informative.

Staff work in partnership with parents to ensure that all of the adults of care for children use a consistent approach. Parents feel that they are consulted about, and included in, the care of their 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: SC358046

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: Karen Tatham

Inspectors

Joanne Vyas: social care inspector

Philip Cass: regulatory inspection manager

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