

2581909

Registered provider: Senad Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is the residential provision of an independent special school. It provides accommodation for up to eight children aged from seven to 16 years who may have learning disabilities or autism spectrum disorder. It registered on 9 April 2020. This is the home's first inspection.

The home has a suitably experienced manager who was registered at the point the home opened.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 May 2021

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: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Overall, children make good progress. Some children have made significant progress in their language and communication skills. Staff are confident in using a range of methods to support communication. Visual timetables and 'now and next' boards are used to help children understand daily routines and make choices. Social stories are used to help children prepare for changes in their routines, such as going to the dentist.

Children's progress is tracked using photos and videos on an online system. The uploaded media is mapped to the outcomes in the child's education, health and care plan. Staff also upload evidence of daily activities, such as playing in the garden.

Communication with families is generally very good; parents receive daily email updates. Parents can access the online progress system to see the uploaded media relating to their child. One parent said how much they enjoy being able to see their child happy, engaged and focused on an activity.

The manager supports children to maintain contact and relationships with people who are important to them. She challenges placing authorities to ensure that children's views about contact are listened to. Although family contact has been restricted during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, the manager has been very supportive and understanding of individual family's and children's needs. She has provided flexible alternative arrangements which have allowed contact to continue. As lockdown has eased, wider family visits have been carefully planned and reintroduced to ensure that they have been successful.

The environment feels homely and is well maintained. Children have large rooms that are adapted to meet their needs and any identified risks. There is plenty of communal space. In addition, the children use sensory and soft-play facilities in school. The outside space is large and is divided up, which means children can play in their own space.

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

Children's behaviour plans are concise and are easy to read and understand. Additional documentation provides clear guidance about how to support children. This includes details about how the child communicates, their daily routines and important health needs. The guidance is clear and easy to understand. This means that staff know the children well and support them in a consistent manner.

Staff promote positive behaviour. They have a good understanding of children's behaviour plans and how to help the children. Physical intervention is used for one child. The frequency, although initially high, has reduced, and interventions are used for a short duration. Children are unable to talk about the incident afterwards, but

staff ensure that they observe the child to see if there is any change in their behaviour or presentation. There is good daily oversight of physical intervention records by the manager.

Minor concerns raised by parents are logged as complaints. These are fully recorded, investigated and responded to. The manager uses these to develop the service and to improve the relationship with parents. Staff use the process to advocate for children by raising complaints on their behalf. This helps to ensure that the child's views are heard and responded to.

Staff understand how to report safeguarding concerns. Low-level concerns and practice issues are given the same level of scrutiny as allegations. Where appropriate, referrals are made to the designated officer. The senior management team oversees all concerns and fully documents its decisions and the rationale behind those decisions. This level of oversight helps to improve staff practice and ensures that children are kept safe.

The recruitment process for permanent and agency staff is thorough. All staff involved in recruitment, including administrative support staff, have completed safer recruitment training. The manager oversees all recruitment checks. This level of scrutiny ensures that staff are suitable to work with vulnerable children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Staff turnover has been high since the home opened. Recruitment and retention of staff have been made priority for the manager. She ensures that all staff leavers have an exit interview, which enables her to understand the reasons for staff leaving. The primary reason has been that staff have been new to the sector and not understood the demands of the work. The manager has used this to make changes to the recruitment and induction process.

Staff turnover has affected the morale of the existing staff. However, staff say that they feel well supported. They receive regular planned supervision, which they find useful and supportive. There is a core team of staff that has established positive relationships with the children. The staff know the children very well and speak positively and warmly about them.

Agency staff are used infrequently. When they are, there are good arrangements in place to ensure that they can support the children. These include coming in for a shadow shift, an induction checklist, and time to read children's plans. Agency staff say this support makes them feel welcome and prepared to support the children.

Most of the staff are not qualified, but training and induction give staff the skills and knowledge they need to meet the children's needs. Staff are enrolled and working towards the required diploma in residential care. Each month, staff have an allocated informal training day which is used for diploma work. In addition, the management team runs informal workshops on these days to update staff skills and address any practice issues.

The home and school use an online electronic recording system. This enables the manager to have a good daily oversight of what is happening in the home. She can view and sign off all records that have been made. However, the system does not clearly differentiate between a home record and a school record. This is also the case for the electronic system that tracks children's progress. This makes it difficult for the manager to have a longer-term view of how the home is performing.

The manager is aware that record-keeping is an area for development. There is duplication and overlap of purpose, which means that staff are not always clear about what they are recording. Some changes have been made to condense records, which staff have found beneficial.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child;</p> <p>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)(c)(d)(e)(h))</p> <p>In particular, this relates to having sufficient qualified staff and being able to differentiate between home and school records to allow for the management oversight and monitoring of all aspects of the home.</p>	<p>1 August 2021</p>

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: 2581909

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Senad Limited

Registered provider address: Senad Group Limited, 1 St George's House, Vernon Gate, Derby, Derbyshire DE1 1UQ

Responsible individual: Mark Flynn

Registered manager: Carly Cherriman

Inspector

Alison Marshall, Social Care Inspector

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