

SC358046

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 privately operated. There is a school on the same site. The home provides care for up to 32 children who have autism spectrum disorder, Asperger syndrome, acquired brain injury and/or communication difficulties. Most of the children living here return to their family home for the school holidays.

The manager became registered with Ofsted in 2014.

The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this school.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 August 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **requires improvement to be good**

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

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 9 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

A compliance notice was issued following the last inspection. At a monitoring visit on 4 July 2022, inspectors judged that compliance actions had been met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/05/2022	Full	Inadequate
06/07/2021	Full	Good
10/07/2019	Full	Good
26/09/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

This is the second full inspection of this home. It follows a previous inspection in May 2022, at which significant safeguarding concerns were identified. Children have become safer. This is because of the actions taken by leaders and managers in response to the safeguarding concerns. The improvements achieved need to be developed and fully embedded to ensure that all children remain safe and have consistently positive experiences.

Children have developed positive relationships with caring and committed staff members. However, recent high staff turnover has had an impact on the consistency of care children receive and on some children's sense of stability and security.

All the children attend the on-site school and their attendance is good. For some, this is significant progress from their starting points, when arriving at the home. During the inspection, some older children received their GCSE exam results, which were excellent.

Staff support children to be physically healthy. This is achieved through diet and exercise. An internal group of professionals, which includes education staff, an occupational therapist, a speech and language therapist and a clinical psychologist, collaborate well to help children. They address a range of individual issues with children that affect their emotional health and well-being.

Staff encourage children to participate in a range of activities. These are both on-site and within the local community. Children have fun. They make friends and enjoy socialising. This helps to develop their confidence and self-esteem and develop new skills.

Staff support older children to develop important skills for later in life. For example, older children learn to plan shopping trips, undertake shopping and then cook food. They develop budgeting skills and learn how to travel independently. This equips the older children for the future and gives them confidence.

Children are fully involved in the development of their care and safety plans. Not only does this help children to develop negotiation skills, but they are also motivated to work towards the goals that they themselves have been involved in setting.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Children's risk assessments guide staff care practice to keeping them safe in many aspects of their lives. However, the quality of risk assessments is not consistent. Some are detailed and comprehensive. Others lack clarity, for example in relation to

specific actions to take following significant incidents. For example, one child's risk assessment regarding online safety had not been updated in the four months they had been living in the home. It was unclear whether the support measures in place were proportionate and appropriate to meet the child's safety needs in this area.

There have been no incidents of children going missing from care. However, not every child has an individual missing-from-care protocol outlining their specific vulnerabilities and risk factors. Protocols do not clearly set out the actions staff should take should any child go missing. A more proactive and individualised approach would help keep children safer.

Since the previous full inspection, behaviour support strategies used by staff have improved. There have been no physical interventions. The use of behavioural contracts and consequences with children have been replaced by a strategy of 'behaviour coaching'. This more restorative approach encourages children to talk about their difficulties. It is helping children to better reflect and learn from incidents rather than feel punished. This new behaviour support system needs to be embedded into staff practice. This will help to ensure that all staff are consistently using this approach and accurately recording the learning and impact of behaviour coaching.

The improvements identified at the monitoring visit in July 2022 in relation to the children's care at night have been maintained. The use of waking night staff and motion sensors have made night-time routines safer. Leaders continue to assess the need for such measures, to ensure that they are responding proportionately to levels of risk and need.

The home's location assessment has been updated. It now includes information about crime data in the immediate locality and nearest cities and towns. This, and improved links with the police, means that staff have a greater understanding of the risks children may face in the community. This is used by staff to educate and support children accordingly.

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

The members of the management team are experienced, caring and committed individuals who work well together as a team. They have led the staff team through a very difficult period. They have been successful in maintaining morale throughout. Managers and staff are committed to doing their best to improve children's experiences.

The leadership response to the inadequate judgement in May 2022 has been positive. Managers and senior staff have been reflective and eager to learn from the identified shortfalls. Managers have reviewed staffing structures and monitoring systems. They have undertaken staff surveys to help understand the reasons for the recent high turnover of staff. They have reviewed the training needs and induction processes for new staff. In response, a detailed improvement plan is in progress.

This now needs to be fully implemented and embedded before it can demonstrate the full impact this will have for children.

Workforce capacity remains a challenge. Recruiting and retaining a skilled and experienced workforce is a priority for the management team. Some new staff have been recruited. A new staff rota is due to be trialled with an aim of giving staff more certainty over shift patterns. Additional training has been rolled out to develop staff skills. This includes specialist external training to help staff fully understand online safety risks and how they can help children learn about risks and become safer. Again, it is still too soon to see the full impact of these positive developments.

Staff receive regular, good-quality and reflective supervision and they attend regular team meetings. These activities are helping staff to learn and develop their confidence and skills to meet the complex needs of children living in the home.

Monitoring systems have improved since the last full inspection. A new management structure provides greater opportunity for oversight and monitoring of each of the three separate houses within the children's home. Managers use both internal and external monitoring systems, alongside children's views, to inform service development.

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.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that risk assessments are completed to a consistent standard, are up to date, and provide clear guidance to staff on the action they need to take to manage risks.</p>	<p>15 October 2022</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should specify the procedures to be followed and the roles and responsibilities of staff when a child is missing from care or away from the home without permission. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 45, paragraph 9.28)
- The registered person should ensure that the importance for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and carry it out. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 46, paragraph 9.38)

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: SC358046

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: The Senad Group Limited

Registered provider address: 1 St George's House, Vernongate, Derby DE1 1UQ

Responsible individual: Mark Flynn

Registered manager: Karen Tatham

Inspectors

Rachel Griffiths, Social Care Inspector

Zoey Lee, Social Care Inspector

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