

SC020193

Registered provider: The SENAD Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to 25 children with severe learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorder and who display associated challenging behaviour.

The manager is not yet registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 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: 23 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/05/2022	Full	Inadequate
24/08/2021	Full	Good
21/01/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/04/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

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

This home was judged inadequate at the full inspection in May 2022. Subsequently, compliance notices and a restriction notice were issued. The conditions set in the notices were found to have been met at a subsequent monitoring visit in June 2022. Managers and leaders have made good progress. This progress and development require further embedding into care practice to ensure that children receive consistently good care.

Children and staff take great pride in the home, which is homely and comfortable. Staff support children to personalise their bedrooms to reflect their individual tastes. Every room is full of children's belongings and reflects their tastes and individuality. The addition of the home's cafe is a huge success, supporting children to develop their social and life skills.

Staff want the best for the children. Despite staff shortages, a core team of staff has persevered through some challenging times. Staff have maintained their resilience, although morale has been affected. They recognise the progress that children make, no matter how small this might be. For example, one child has been supported to attend medical appointments. Other children have been supported to engage in activities together. This is good progress.

Children have developed positive relationships with familiar staff members. However, changes in staff teams have, at times, resulted in children being supported by staff they are less familiar with. Consequently, children have experienced some disrupted relationships.

Staff seek children's views and ensure that these are acted on whenever possible. Children make decisions about their daily activities and changes to the home decor and menus. Staff are skilled at observing children, picking up on non-verbal cues and changes in their behaviour that might indicate something is wrong. This has been further strengthened following additional staff training in children's specific forms of communication, for example Makaton. Communication audits have identified recommendations, and these have been acted on to ensure that communication tools are used correctly.

Although staff shortages had adversely affected the range of activities children could take part in, the successful recruitment of new staff has enabled children to enjoy a range of activities and enriching experiences once again.

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

Managers and staff have reviewed and updated children's individual risk assessments. These assessments are now comprehensive and contain all the relevant information and guidance staff need to understand children's needs and identify risks. However, two examples were identified where staff had not

implemented risk assessments effectively. This resulted in one child being scratched by a peer. This fails to support children to build positive relationships.

The accuracy of the physical-intervention records has improved. In addition, children to talk to staff about their experience of being restrained after it has happened. This ensures that children can express their feelings and are able to discuss any support they need following incidents. If a child does not use verbal communication, staff try to ascertain their views using different communication methods. Managers support staff to understand the reasons for the behaviour to prevent reoccurrence.

Staff promote positive behaviour in the children and are consistent in their approach to managing behaviour. However, the manager has identified a difference in approaches to supporting children between the care and education staff. The manager is working with staff and training both teams to ensure that a consistent approach is used across both settings.

Managers' monitoring and oversight of incidents and physical interventions have improved. This has enabled the manager to identify patterns, trends and concerns. The manager has been able to identify incidents where she has been concerned about staff practice. These incidents have been investigated, and referral has been made to the local authority designated officer where required.

The manager ensures that incidents and allegations are appropriately reported and thoroughly investigated. The appropriate agencies are communicated with, and a strategy agreed. This ensures that children are safeguarded effectively.

The manager places the safety and welfare of children first and recruits new staff in accordance with safer recruitment protocols. New staff undergo a range of checks that are designed to minimise the likelihood of children being harmed by those caring for them. Work is being undertaken to ensure that staff from overseas are suitably checked.

A specialist independent advocate has been employed. In addition, staff have completed training to ensure that they understand the role of the advocate. This ensures that children's voices are listened to.

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

Staff shortages have affected the experiences of children. Staff vacancies have continued to be covered by staff going above and beyond their contractual hours and the use of agency staff. This has improved recently. Managers have been creative in recruiting to fill current vacancies, including the provision of sponsorship opportunities for staff, and a number of these vacancies have now been appointed to. This will ease the pressure on staff going forwards.

Monitoring by managers has improved, with new systems being embedded. For example, the manager uses improved monitoring tools for quality assurance processes, and the introduction of staff practice observation forms has been

implemented. These developments should help to improve the quality of care and experiences provided for children.

The manager has encouraged the staff team to improve day-to-day working practices. Most staff gave positive feedback. Some staff have identified areas for improvement, indicating that there is still some work to do around listening to staff and improving staff morale.

Staff have undertaken a wealth of training since the last visit. Staff have benefited from a comprehensive training programme that is tailored to equip them with the skills to meet the needs of the children, for example training in children's communication techniques, such as Makaton.

Managers have failed to ensure that all staff receive regular supervision, and supervision sessions are, at times, rushed. One staff member has received only two supervisions this year. In addition, not all supervision records include evidence of reflective practice, and some records are hard to read. These shortfalls do not support staff to develop in their roles, and opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice may be lost.

The manager and senior management have clear plans to develop the service further. They are aware of the strengths and areas they wish to improve. There is an aspiration to provide good help and support for children.

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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same;</p> <p>de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children;</p> <p>that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(x)(xi)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that children are supervised and supported to build positive relationships with others.</p>	<p>20 September 2022</p>
<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>20 September 2022</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;</p> <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</p> <p>that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iv)(b))</p> <p>This is specifically in relation to ensuring that risk assessments are read, understood and implemented by staff.</p>	
<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>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(d))</p> <p>This relates to staff sufficiency to provide effective care to children and working as a coordinated team.</p>	20 October 2022
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p>	20 September 2022

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: SC020193

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: Brian Jones

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Zoey Lee, Social Care Inspector

Julie Knight, Social Care Inspector

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