

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 registered to provide care for up to 39 children and young people aged from five to 19 years who may have learning disabilities, Prader-Willi syndrome, or autism spectrum disorder conditions. Children live in one of five houses on the same site as an independent special school. This inspection focussed solely on the children's home.

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced. He has been registered with Ofsted since January 2017.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 November 2023

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

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

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: 20 July 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/07/2022	Full	Good
17/08/2021	Full	Outstanding
04/06/2019	Full	Outstanding
15/05/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children are extremely well cared for by staff who are committed and dedicated. This helps children to make exceptionally good progress. Staff celebrate children's successes no matter how small these may be. For some children this means they have reconnected with family. For others they have worked toward and achieved their goals. For example, children now able to wear better footwear. For all the children in this home their progress is highly significant and improves their lives.

Highly effective working with a dietician means that for children with complex health needs, their health has dramatically improved. For example, some children no longer take medication for diabetes. This is because staff have received specialist advice to help children to follow a programme of healthy eating and weight loss. This has meant significant progress to the health outcomes.

Flexibility, and the motivation to provide the best care possible, means that children's complex needs are met very well. The barriers to children meeting their development and progress targets overcome by staff and managers. For instance, when difficulties arise within a peer group due to having to share a living space, there is flexibility to change the environment. This has meant that children live in houses that are calm and nurturing.

Maintaining family relationships is a paramount consideration when planning the children's care. Families say the care their children receive is second to none and that it has been transformative. Families of older children say that when a significant milestone is coming up, such as transitioning to adulthood, the home has been supportive. Maintaining strong family ties has also meant that time spent together for families has been a more positive experience.

Children's aspirations, wishes and feelings are captured in several ways. Chat books that capture the views of children, and how staff have responded to children's requests. There are many examples where children had set themselves an aspirational target. Staff have then helped them to make steps to achieve these goals, and has included staying in a lodge, going to the coast, and visiting a theme park abroad.

The relationships between staff and children are extremely positive. Staff want and strive to achieve the very best for the children. Sometimes children's care needs present significant challenges. Staff are resilient and remain focussed on positive outcomes. The staff care for children with highly complex needs, as well as significant health care needs, such as epilepsy.

The houses that children live in are decorated to a good standard throughout. Bedrooms are personalised to reflect the children's interests. Staff find the right

balance, so that the children's living environment remain homely, while ensuring that the environment is also safe.

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

Staff are proactive in their approach to ensuring that children remain safe. The children's individual risk assessments are very detailed. These enable staff to understand how they should respond to children. Children's risk assessments are updated by managers regularly. Records of incidents are usually clear and detailed. However, some records have not always been fully completed.

Well considered strategies are employed to help children manage their behaviours. This enables children to become more independent in managing their own emotions. For some children physical intervention has been required, at times, to manage their behaviour. When a physical intervention takes place, managers ensure that analysis is undertaken to reflect and learn from these incidents. Over time, physical interventions have reduced for most children, while for others there is some fluctuation.

Managers respond to any allegations against staff, in accordance with guidance. Records of investigations show a thorough approach to managing concerns. When allegations have been made, managers work with safeguarding partners to ensure that all allegations are shared, and investigations take place. Staff are also supported throughout this process. This process assures that children are protected.

Some children have regular medication to help with their health and wellbeing. Senior staff are provided with training on how to administer medication safely. There are safeguards in place to reduce the likelihood of mistakes and errors. These include management audits and competency checks with staff. However, there continues to be some medication administration errors.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is highly dedicated and has a solid understanding of the home. With his senior staff team, they know the children extremely well. They work effectively with a team of care staff, specialist health professionals, and alongside school staff. Together they form a coherent team around each child. A shared vision means that all staff are working towards children making individual progress in relation to their targets and aspirations.

A strong focus on improving staff retention, together with a successful recruitment campaign has led to consistency of staff teams across the houses. While some vacancies remain, the care of children has not been compromised. For some children with complex learning disabilities this consistency is crucial and led to very positive improvements.

Staff are extremely well supported. They are provided with mandatory, and more specific training. This means that staff are equipped with the knowledge to care for

children with complex health and care needs. Where needed, specialised training is identified and delivered to staff.

Staff receive regular and effective supervision. Through the appropriate use of scenario-based questions, or asking about specific policy and procedures, this explores the staff's knowledge and skills. This has ensured that staff know how to implement the policies of the home, to positively impact on the care of the children. The manager also receives regular supervision by the head teacher.

There has been an improvement in the managers oversight of care staff. Better and more effective monitoring systems, have ensured that the staff are now delivering exceptional care to children.

The leadership team know the strengths and weaknesses of the homes. Areas for improvement are known. The registered manager successfully delegates areas of development to his deputies. This has ensured that the homes continue to be positive environments where children can flourish. Additionally, the manager has improved the homes development plan, making this more centred and focused on this home.

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

- The registered person must ensure that care is taken when administering medication to the individual for whom they are prescribed. Medicines must be administered in line with a medically approved protocol. Records must be kept of the administration of all medication, which includes occasions when prescribed medication is refused. Regulation 23 requires the registered person to ensure that they make suitable arrangements to manage, administer and dispose of any medication. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15).
- The registered person must ensure that staff are familiar with the homes policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that is helpful to the child. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: SC372504

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 Ryder

Registered manager: Matthew Cousins

Inspector(s)

Simon Hunter, Social Care Inspector

Lizette Watts, Social Care Inspector

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