

# 1249111

Registered provider: Serenity Care Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to four children between the ages of eight and 17 with a range of needs including severe loss and trauma.

There is a suitably qualified registered manager who has been in post since December 2016, when the home was registered.

**Inspection dates:** 2 to 3 May 2018

**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 **requires improvement to be good**

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

**Date of last inspection:** 15 January 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** sustained effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
04/07/2017	Full	Good

## 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>(a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>(b) promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(h))</p>	29/06/2018
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>(a) receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and</p> <p>(b) have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>(b) that arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>(i) ensure the effective induction of each child into the home;</p> <p>(c) that each child's relevant plans are followed;</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that impact assessments completed before a young person moves into the home contain sufficient detail of how young people may affect each other's care. The registered person must also ensure that care plans contain up-to-date, sufficiently detailed guidance about how to care for young people.</p>	29/06/2018
<p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>(a) employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>(3) The requirements are that—</p> <p>(d) full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.</p> <p>(Regulation 32(2) &amp; (3)(d) Schedule2)</p>	29/06/2018

In particular, the registered person must ensure that each person's recruitment file has evidence of all the required checks listed in Schedule 2. Where there are omissions the registered person must ensure these errors are resolved promptly.	
The registered person must— (a) keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and (b) notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(3)(a)(b))	29/06/2018
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— (a) maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4;  Schedule 4(3) a copy of the staff duty roster of persons working at the home, and a record of the actual rosters worked. (Regulation 37 (1)(2) and Schedule 4(3))  In particular, the registered person must ensure that the actual working hours for all staff each day are recorded.	29/06/2018

## Recommendations

- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)

In particular, the registered person should ensure that children's meeting minutes fully record what actions need to be taken. The registered person should also ensure that all actions are followed up at the subsequent children's meeting.

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

In particular, the registered person should provide clear guidance about where each type of document is to be stored; this applies to electronic and paper records.

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)  
In particular, the registered person should assess and record whether a personal evacuation plan is necessary if a young person refuses to leave the home when there is a fire drill. The registered person should also ensure that the staff inform new young people, staff and visitors of the home's evacuation procedures.

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are supported to make progress; they develop a better understanding of how events that have happened in the past affect their lives now. For example, the staff support and facilitate contact with children's families effectively. The staff understand the potential impact this may have on a child because of their relationship with their parent, and prepare the child, and themselves, to manage contact well.

Staff develop good relationships with children which help them to progress and develop healthier lifestyles. One child said that this is a good home because, 'The staff really care about you'.

Regular, well-recorded and good quality conversations between the staff and children help children deal with a variety of issues that are relevant to them. The discussions encourage children to explore and understand their strengths and weaknesses. The staff provide good quality advice to children during these talks, which help children to identify their wishes and aspirations for the future.

Children are encouraged and supported to attend school. Children's responses to education vary; if their attendance dips, the staff continue to reiterate the importance of education and help children to be aspirational about their lives. This has resulted in one child taking the lead on decisions about where she is going to college and the course which she will attend. Her involvement has increased her attachment to her education provision and demonstrates a real and positive change in attitude towards it. The child had previously been absent from education for some time.

The staff listen to and act on children's views, involving them in decisions and the everyday life of the home. The manager is working with the staff to improve the way children's meetings operate. The improvements being developed will help children to reflect on the impact of their behaviour. Feedback to children about any agreed actions is not clearly reviewed at the next meeting. This is a missed opportunity to demonstrate further to children that the staff respect and act on their views.

Independence is encouraged and supported, although this is an area for improvement that the manager has already identified in her development plan. A more formal process for assessing and supporting children's independence is to be implemented this year.

The quality of care plans is varied. Plans and assessments that staff follow when a child is missing or may go missing are clear, detailed and provide practical advice and guidance for staff to implement and follow. Targets set to help children to progress are written as wide-ranging statements, such as 'to work towards getting free time'. The statements are not supported by clear measures of what the child must do to achieve the target. An impact risk assessment did not thoroughly detail the potential issues which may arise between children and confirm how any risks will be minimised. The level of recording does not reflect the practice in place and is a missed opportunity to ensure that children have a detailed account of how they are looked after.

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

There is a good understanding of how to respond to safeguarding concerns. The staff proactively support children to make more positive choices. The staff communicate well with relevant agencies, friends and the police when children go missing. A police and community safety officer spoke positively about how the staff worked with him in finding children who were missing, and always welcomed him to the home when he visited.

The staff respond positively to difficult behaviour. The staff use reflective practice to quickly consider how to best manage difficult situations, and quickly change strategies should they consider that this might be helpful. This means the staff manage situations as safely as possible and reduce risks of harm.

Children have complex needs as a result of experiences such as severe trauma and loss. The staff tenaciously support children to understand the impact of these experiences on their lives. As a result, children are beginning to explore, share and recognise how their previous experiences are affecting them now.

Behaviour management plans are well written and include details of triggers and suggested strategies and techniques to support children to calm. Staff use physical intervention sparingly. When restraint occurs the staff hold children for the shortest time possible and use the lowest form of hold.

The registered manager is reviewing all recruitment files to ensure that these comply with the necessary level of checks required. Some issues have been identified and are being rectified. The checklist in use is not sufficiently detailed, and copies of identity documents have not been retained.

Many aspects of health and safety were managed safely, but some were not. Food in refrigerators was not stored safely. Items which might be used for self-harm are not consistently identified and made safe in the garden and forecourt of the home. Both issues were addressed during the inspection, and the manager put in place records to ensure that daily checks of all areas are made.

Checks that any child or member of staff who is new to the home takes part in a fire drill or has fire instruction are not clearly recorded. If children refuse to take part in fire drills, the need for a personal evacuation plan has not been considered.

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

The registered manager has a good understanding of children's needs and is passionate about improving their life chances. The registered manager knows her team well. She can identify staff's strengths and weaknesses. She has an understanding of how the staff's abilities are complementary, and provide a range of skills to support children and facilitate management tasks. The registered manager models practice effectively and challenges poor practice.

Leaders and managers' oversight of the home does not consistently identify shortfalls. There are several examples where monitoring practices are ineffective:

- Reviews of policies, procedures and practice are inadequate. For example, there is no guidance to minimise the risks from the staff using their personal mobile phones to communicate with children. Guidance about restrictive practices such as the use of CCTV is not up to date, and procedures for removing everyday items when children's aggressive behaviours are of concern are not clearly recorded.
- The statement of purpose has been updated but the amended statement has not been submitted to Ofsted. The content of the statement does not accurately reflect all aspects of the home, such as clearly reflecting the safeguarding procedures the staff should follow. As a result of this inspection, the manager is reviewing how well the statement accurately depicts the operation of the home.
- Supervision records vary in quality. Some records provide a clear account of the discussions and actions taken. Other records lack sufficient detail. This shortfall is not identified by managers who sign off each supervision record. However, supervision is regular and staff appreciate the support they receive.
- Plans that guide staff in their responses to incidents of self-harm are not sufficiently individual to each child. Action began during the inspection to improve these plans.

The responsible individual and registered manager have identified that the monthly visits by the independent person provide an insufficient level of challenge to their practice. Many issues identified in this report had not been recognised by the independent visitor. This lack of challenge weakens leaders and managers' ability to recognise concerns and act swiftly to rectify them.

Sufficient numbers of staff are on duty to meet the needs of children. Rotas record which care staff are on duty each day. However, the rotas do not provide full details of when the registered manager and deputy manager work in the home each day.

Training is well organised and covers a wide diversity of appropriate courses. The staff quickly work towards gaining the necessary level of qualification in appropriate timescales. The staff training plan for 2018–19 has been developed so that it includes a variety of well-considered learning opportunities which are provided online and face-to-face.

The managers are innovative in their approach to gaining access to a wide range of already-organised training. A range of competency assessments are also being introduced so that the quality of training and staff's practice can be monitored. The staff are positive about the training they receive and how this improves their practice.

Positive relationships with other professionals are cultivated. The staff will challenge others if they have concerns that decisions being made are not in children's best interests. One social worker described the home as 'superb'. She said the staff are easy to contact and, 'It [the home] is a warm place where children feel cared for.'

## **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:** 1249111

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Serenity Care Homes Ltd

**Registered provider address:** Greenacres, Silver Street, Hordle, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 0FN

**Responsible individual:** Deborah Lymbery

**Registered manager:** Emma Partington

## Inspectors

Ruth Coler, social care inspector

Amanda Maxwell, social care inspector



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