

# 1249111

Registered provider: Serenity Care Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The staff at this home care for children who have specific attachment, behavioural, emotional and social needs because of their childhood experiences.

The manager was registered with Ofsted on 14 December 2016.

**Inspection dates:** 30 April to 1 May 2019

**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:** 2 May 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/05/2018	Full	Good
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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</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)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that the organisation implements the findings of their review of policy on the staff's phone use. The registered person must provide suitable means for staff to remain in contact with each other, and children, when they are in the community. The agreed procedures must ensure children cannot access the staff's personal data.</p>	07/06/2019
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. 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>In particular, the registered person must ensure that risk assessments are quickly reviewed after an incident occurs and, where necessary, update the assessment.</p>	07/06/2019
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the</p>	07/06/2019

<p>individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2: a full employment history, together with a satisfactory explanation of any gaps in employment, in writing. (Schedule 2(6) Regulation 32(2)(3)(d))</p>	
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e))</p>	<p>07/06/2019</p>

## Recommendations

- Children's homes should work closely with the placing authority to understand the child's relationship history and the impact that the child's arrival may have on the group living in the home. Staff should understand, for each child, what the placing authority has recorded in the relevant plan as an appropriate level of contact with family and friends. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 38, paragraph 8.3)

In particular, the registered person should ensure that all the information obtained prior to deciding the home can or cannot meet a child's needs is clearly recorded in the impact assessment.

- 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 ensure that the staff consistently adhere to fire precaution procedures.

- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents, such as learning from disruptions and placement breakdowns. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

In particular, the registered person should review their monitoring systems to ensure these adequately cover all aspects of the service. Where any gaps are identified, plans should be put in place to rectify these omissions.

## Inspection judgements

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

Children are thoughtfully helped to move into the home. Staff use a variety of ways to involve children in the move prior to them arriving. The result is that children generally settle quickly. The impact assessments completed prior to a child's admission do not contain all the actions managers and staff take to understand how they could look after the child. This is a missed opportunity to record all the good work undertaken.

Staff build warm relationships with children. One young person described the staff as being her 'family' because of the way they care for her. Staff spend time with children doing things that matter to them. One member of staff was a model for a young person at their make-up class at college. He came back with striking Ziggy Stardust type make-up, which everyone praised the child for. A social worker said that staff continue to support a young person, and commented: 'Even when she is very challenging, they stick with the her.'

Planning for children's care is sensitive and supportive of their needs and wishes. Behaviour management plans provide staff with good guidance on how to care for the child.

Children's views are sought frequently and are used to consider how staff can best support them. One social worker said that the staff act as strong advocates and make sure that children's opinions are included in decisions made about them.

Healthy lifestyles are promoted. Staff support children to attend medical appointments, and assist them in learning to cook healthy meals and maintain a balanced diet. Regular meetings between staff and a clinical psychologist have been introduced. Staff said that these meetings have helped them to respond more effectively to children needs. They said the meetings have helped them to develop a better understanding of the underlying causes of a child's behaviours, and to learn new ways to respond to these.

The staff encourage children to attend school and achieve. Managers support local authorities to find an appropriate school for each child and ensure that the home has positive contact with the schools the children attend. When a child is not in school, appropriate action is taken to support the child's education, and to help and challenge the local authority to find a school placement as soon as possible.

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

Staff follow safety plans and share concerns with relevant agencies appropriately. One social worker commented positively on the relationship that the staff have with the British Transport Police. Working quickly together, the two agencies stopped a vulnerable young person from going missing. The staff diligently ensure that any

additional information is passed on to relevant professionals, especially in relation to information about inappropriate people who the children may have contact with. One social worker praised the staff for helping a young person to develop a better understanding of internet safety.

Staff carefully work to agreed plans for preventing children from going missing. However, the staff often use their own telephones to communicate with each other when looking for a child who has gone missing. One child texted a member of staff's mobile phone number. While it is not clear how the child obtained this number, if staff use their own phones for work purposes, this poses the unnecessary risk that children could gain access to the staff's personal data.

Staff collaboratively risk-assess situations. Their decisions are based on children's needs and, while mindful of risks, the staff are not risk averse. Nevertheless, changes to risk assessment records are not timely. This prevents clear guidance from being available for staff regarding any changes or additional concerns that they should consider.

Staff create many opportunities, and make sure that they talk to and spend quality time with the children. The staff quickly and thoughtfully support children who are upset or distressed.

The recruitment procedures have improved. However, any gaps in an applicant's work history are not adequately explored.

Health and safety checks have improved. Maintenance issues are now dealt with more promptly. However, during the inspection, information was not available for visitors about the home's fire procedures, a fire door was propped open and two visitors who left the building did not sign out. Action was taken immediately to rectify these issues. However, these concerns indicate that the staff do not consistently ensure that fire precautions are adhered to.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of what they do well, and areas for improvement.

Staff supervision is regular and helpful, and staff feel well supported. Staff said that supervision helps them to improve their practice, and identifies their good practice. Staff feel that they can speak to managers if they need to and are able to raise concerns openly.

Social workers reported good working relationships with the staff. They said that the staff contribute well to decision-making, come prepared to meetings and provide regular updates on children's progress. One social worker said that when she raised a concern, the staff responded well to this and sorted the problem out.

Staff complete all of the necessary core training to equip them for their role. A new organisational training lead has been appointed. He will shortly take up his post, with the aim of increasing the range and breadth of training provided and enhancing the staff's understanding of new and emerging safeguarding issues.

Monitoring systems have improved. Monitoring tools provide clear monthly reviews of practice and identify what needs to improve. For example, staff were not holding regular meetings with children, and actions taken by managers have improved this aspect of work. However, leaders and managers did not ensure that one notification was sent to Ofsted. The home's record-keeping is not always sufficiently detailed and clear, and does not reflect the quality of the work undertaken.



## **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

## Inspector

Ruth Coler: social care inspector

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