

# SC478315

Registered provider: The Serendipity Centre Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to four children. The organisation has two other homes in the local area and a school, all of which are registered with Ofsted. Three children were living in the home at the time of this inspection.

Only the social care provision was inspected at this inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2021.

### Inspection dates: 6 and 7 September 2023

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

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

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:** 16 August 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/08/2022	Full	Good
22/07/2021	Full	Good
08/01/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/08/2019	Full	Inadequate

## Inspection judgements

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

This feels very much like a family home. Children interact with each other and with staff in a very relaxed way that is characterised by being kind, thoughtful and having fun. The strength of these relationships provides children with a secure base to make excellent and sustained progress in important areas of their lives.

Staff demonstrate genuine warmth in their care of the children. They engage with children in a nurturing way that encourages and supports them to feel valued, build confidence and shape the world around them. Children say that they feel happy in the home and that staff help them to understand and address areas of their lives and previous experiences that had caused them difficulties and distress.

Children who have found it hard to settle in previous homes now feel settled. Staff support them to have healthy routines, to pursue interests and hobbies and to develop positive relationships with their peers in the home, at school and in the community. The children frequently enjoy activities with staff, such as cinema trips, trampolining and shopping. Staff also support children's hobbies and interests, such as attending youth clubs, horse riding, boxing and arts and crafts.

Some children who have struggled to engage in education are now attending mainstream schools and are doing well. Another child who moved into the home more recently is fully engaged in educational activities and the staff have advocated strongly with the professional network to ensure that she has a clear plan of support to re-engage with a suitable education placement. Her move into the home was well planned and she says that she feels very welcome and well prepared. The child's social worker describes the manager and staff as 'brilliant'. He says that the child has made impressive progress in a short space of time.

There is a psychologist attached to the home who provides direct support to children and staff and who engages with the professional networks outside of the home. Her involvement means that staff are well informed in terms of understanding children's needs and are supported to develop strategies to help children to make excellent progress in their emotional development and understanding about how to stay safe. Her input and expert assessment have been instrumental in ensuring that the education plan for one child was well informed and would meet her needs.

Children are supported to develop and sustain positive relationships with their families. One family member described how the staff communicate very well and work closely with her. She feels that the child is now more confident and has made 'massive improvements' in terms of engaging in education and no longer going missing.

Children are healthy and staff support them to keep active, to eat well and to learn how to make healthy choices. Children access health services and attend routine appointments.

Children take an active part in the daily life of the home and are involved in cooking, shopping and keeping their bedrooms clean and tidy. The support they get to learn to become independent goes beyond basic skills, and children are taught to take responsibility and ownership for contributing to the home in which they live.

**How well children and young people are helped and protected:  
outstanding**

Children are supported to develop the skills and insight that they need to make safer choices. They report feeling able to talk to staff about things which they used to find difficult to talk about. One child described how staff have helped her to cope much better with conflict and challenge. She previously responded to some situations by not eating. This is no longer an issue as she is now able to talk things through with staff.

Children who previously went missing frequently from placements now seldom go missing. Staff hold clear and firm boundaries and expectations of acceptable behaviour. They will, when necessary, intervene robustly to keep children safe. For example, on occasion, it has been necessary to restrict access to mobile phones and social media, and children have accepted this. The children have secure relationships with staff, and they understand that staff are 'looking out' for them. Children are unanimous in saying that they feel that they can share any worries or concerns with trusted staff.

Staff achieve a good balance between the need to keep children safe and the need for children to take acceptable risks. They know the children well, understand their vulnerabilities and implement well-informed strategies to help them to stay safe. Children who were previously at high risk of exploitation are now able to access the community unsupervised and safely. They have been supported to develop and sustain healthy, age-appropriate peer relationships.

Children who previously found it hard to attend therapeutic services now access and enjoy making use of a range of support, including play therapy and equine therapy. This helps children to seek out and talk to staff about how they feel and to learn coping strategies.

There is an open culture where staff and children feel safe to raise concerns. When children are considered to be at risk, staff work effectively with the professional network and parents to share information and agree how best to intervene.

Staff receive excellent training to ensure that they are equipped to meet the needs of the children. Their care practice is well informed through reflective group meetings and individual consultations with the psychologist attached to the home.

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

Leaders and managers have high expectations for the children in their care. They are creative, resilient and persistent in their efforts to ensure that children reach their potential. They are active leaders in the professional network and advocate effectively to ensure that their well-informed insight into the individual children's needs is at the heart of care planning and decision-making.

The registered manager has close oversight of the quality of care provided to children. He is visible in the home and is accessible to children and staff. He is supported by a very capable deputy manager, and they work effectively as a team to provide clear support and direction to staff. Both are very well thought of by staff and children. Between them, they have a keen sense of how children are experiencing care and how staff are delivering care. If care practice falls below the high standards expected, managers notice quickly and manage performance effectively. This helps to create a secure and stable environment where children and staff feel supported and appreciated.

The registered manager has good systems in place to monitor the quality of care. He keeps a close eye on recording, which ensures that excellent care practice is underpinned by clear record-keeping. Care plans and risk assessments are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are updated and relevant to children. This enables a shared understanding of children's individual needs, which helps children to experience consistent responses from the adults who care for them.

Managers are thoughtful about how they recruit, induct and support new staff coming into the home. There is a common theme from staff feedback that this is the 'best' home they have worked in. They say that the training, support and child-centred ethos of the home contribute to their enjoyment of working at the home. Staff morale is high and there are always enough suitably experienced staff on duty to maintain high standards and to provide a consistent experience of care for children.

The home has a linked education setting for children who have typically been excluded from mainstream schools. However, the children currently living in the home have all been supported to attend mainstream education to meet their individual needs and abilities.

## **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:** SC478315

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

**Registered provider:** The Serendipity Centre Limited

**Registered provider address:** 1st Floor, Goodlands House, St Lukes Close, Hedge End, Southampton SO30 2US

**Responsible individual:** Sean Maguinness

**Registered manager:** Kenneth Rowe

## Inspectors

Tony Waite, Social Care Inspector

Lee Kirwin, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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