

1240572

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company, and it is registered to care for up to two children or young people who may have social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since May 2020.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 March 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 10 November 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/11/2021	Full	Good
02/03/2020	Full	Good
23/07/2018	Full	Outstanding
22/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are happy and settled here. They have positive relationships with the staff, which are built on honesty and mutual respect. Children said that they get on with their peers, and if they need space, they go into another area of the home. One child said, 'The staff are great. This is my home.'

Children enjoy an extensive range of fun activities. Activities are planned to encourage and support the children's interest, such as having guitar lessons. One child told the inspector about their trip to the safari park with staff. They explained that they had never been before, and it was a wonderful experience.

Staff are particularly good at helping children to achieve their individual goals. One child wanted to build their own computer. They created a budget plan, and staff helped them to earn additional money by doing jobs in the home. This not only enabled the child to purchase the parts that they needed but helped them develop a range of skills that will support them into adulthood.

Children learn to be independent. They enjoy the opportunities to do jobs around the home, such as helping to prepare meals, clean up afterwards and complete minor repairs or painting. This successfully fosters children's confidence and self-esteem.

Staff are strong advocates for children's education. For example, when children have not attended education for a long time, staff provide tutors to gently ease them back into learning. Staff work tirelessly with other professionals to secure the right schools for children and create bespoke plans to reintegrate them into education. This reduces the potential of a failed school placement.

Staff make learning fun. Children are offered a range of activities that have an underlying educational base. Staff plan theme nights with quizzes, which encourages the children to research the answers and look at what food they can prepare.

Children's emotional health and well-being are improving. Children have access to a range of therapeutic support to help them to navigate their feelings and emotions. Some children have made the decision to decline further support, but they know that this is available to them should they change their mind.

Staff regularly talk to the children about issues that may affect their health, such as a poor diet and using cannabis or a vape. Consequently, children are more aware of their own physical health. One child said that they know the dangers of vaping, such as 'popcorn lung', and have reduced their usage of the vape.

Staff know that children staying connected with their families and other people who are important to them is vital. Different arrangements are in place to ensure that

this happens. Children told the inspector about how staff make sure that they see their family and 'make it ok'. Consequently, children can sustain and rebuild these important relationships.

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

Staff have a sound understanding of child protection and effective safeguarding practice. Staff are trained in safeguarding and other subjects, such as radicalisation, county lines, knife crime and child sexual exploitation. Staff are confident to talk to children about how to keep themselves safe when away from the home. This has seen a reduction in risks to children as they are able to move away from tricky situations.

Children said that they are safe in the home and can talk to the staff about anything that is concerning them. Staff told the inspector about the whistle-blowing procedures and how they would escalate their concerns if they felt ineffective action was taken.

Recently, staff did not immediately report potential concerns to the appropriate person. This led to a delay in action being taken. This did not have a detrimental impact on the child. Steps have been taken to address this to prevent a recurrence.

Children rarely go missing from home. When this has occurred, staff acted quickly and notified the appropriate persons. Children said that they know to keep in touch with staff when out with their friends. They said this is because the staff care about them and want to know that they are safe.

Children behave well and respect the staff. Staff provide consistent messages of support, which enables children to consider their options and make informed decisions. As a result, children grow in confidence.

Children live in a warm, welcoming home. They are fully informed of the decisions made about the decor and layout of the home. Children are proud of their home. Recently, a room was converted into a games room at the children's request. This has quickly become a favourite place for the children to use.

Recruitment and vetting procedures are secure, which means children are cared for by suitable adults. This keeps children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A committed and qualified manager manages the home. He has high aspirations for the children and staff. He encourages staff to undertake training to support their knowledge and skills and enhance their career development. Staff are complimentary about the support he provides and how he instils confidence in the team. Staff said that they found the training invaluable, especially the therapeutic training.

Staff receive regular one-to-one supervision that gives them the opportunity to reflect on their practice and identify areas or opportunities for their development. In addition to this, staff have regular team meetings and daily handovers. This means that they can pass on relevant key information and provide continuity of care for the children.

Monitoring of the home by the manager and independent person is not yet secure. The independent person has not been proactive in seeking the views of the children living in the home. This means that children's views on the service have not been considered.

Monitoring of the home by the manager and independent person has not identified the inconsistencies in the quality of record-keeping. Consequently, records do not tell the story of the children's time in the home. Furthermore, children's wishes and feeling are lost in records, as staff record their interpretation of what children are saying rather than what children have said. This hinders children's ability to reflect on and understand their history.

The manager and staff work collaboratively with a range of agencies. They advocate well for children and actively challenge professionals when services have been slow to respond or are not available. Consequently, children have received the support that they needed in a timely manner.

Social workers and professionals are complimentary about the care and support provided to children. One said that this is an 'excellent home' that over time has significantly reduced the risks to children. Furthermore, staff know the children well and are always prepared for meetings.

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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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— that staff— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v))	12 May 2023
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(h))	12 May 2023
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—	12 May 2023

if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a))	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear record-keeping, and that the home's records tell the story of the child's time in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that the children's wishes and feelings are recorded in their own words in the records. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.6)

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: 1240572

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 49 Whitegate Drive, Blackpool FY3 9DG

Responsible individual: David Lahey

Registered manager: Liam Fairnie

Inspector

Chris Scully, Social Care Inspector

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