

1271375

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider. It provides care for up to three children of either gender.

The home is overseen by a qualified manager who was registered with Ofsted in March 2021.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We visited this setting on 7 October 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 July 2021

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 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: Requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: We visited this setting on 7 October 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. Serious and widespread concerns were identified at this visit which resulted in two compliance notices being issued, in respect of regulations 12 and 13. Ofsted carried out a further visit to the home on 25 November 2020, to consider actions taken in relation to the compliance notices.

At the visit, inspectors found that there had been sufficient action taken by the manager to meet these notices.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/03/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good
21/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/10/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last visit, children living in this home have had different experiences. One child was moved from the home quickly due to an escalation in unsafe behaviours. Another child was able to progress in line with their plans and had a positive and planned move to live more independently. The child currently living in the home is being supported to have positive experiences and is provided with good-quality care.

Children regularly see their family and are helped to have positive experiences with friends. One child has been able to convert the garage into a 'man cave'. This gives him privacy and space to be with his friends while remaining well monitored by staff. Furthermore, children's friends have accompanied them on activities and trips out. This helps children to build and maintain positive support networks outside of the home.

The child currently living in the home is reluctant to engage in education. The manager regularly meets with relevant professionals to discuss next steps and to access external support to help the child to attend. Staff encourage the child to engage in informal learning and planned activities. This helps to maintain the child's routines and promotes improvement in this area.

Children's health needs are a priority and they are supported to attend health appointments. When children have needs in relation to their health, regular and informative work sessions are carried out. Furthermore, therapists spend time in the home. They are proactive in building relationships with children and provide staff with guidance in relation to supporting children's needs. This supports children's mental and emotional health and contributes to their overall physical health.

Children like and trust the staff who care for them. There has been one occasion when staff did not respond well to a child. During this incident, the actions of a staff member served to quickly escalate an incident in the home. The incident does not reflect the patient and understanding relationships that children need from those supporting them.

Children have not always had positive experiences of moving out of the home. One child moved out during an episode of being missing from home and did not return to the home. Therefore, he was not involved in the decision-making or planning process and was not able to say goodbye to the staff team or other child he lived with. No efforts were made to contact or visit this child during or after his move. This does not help children to have the best possible experiences of moving out of the home.

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

There have been a significant number of incidents of children going missing from home. Few of these have been overnight. The response to these incidents has been proactive and robust. Staff actively search for and contact children when they are away from the home. This supports children's return and reduces risk.

Individual risk assessments in place for children are detailed and individualised. They accurately assess all current risks posed to children. Staff are aware of known risks and regularly consult with and support children to understand these. This ensures children are well informed and helps them to understand the potential consequences of their risk-taking behaviours.

Plans in place to positively support children's behaviours are robust and provide staff with clear and comprehensive guidance to respond to children. They incorporate direction from the home's clinician, who helps to develop the child-friendly strategies included. This helps staff to manage children's behaviours in the most positive and effective way. During the visit, inspectors observed staff using known preventative strategies in their general practice. This helps to minimise incidents and improves children's safety.

Impact risk assessments have not been effective. They have not adequately assessed the risks arising from children living with others in the home. This has meant that children with very similar risks and behaviours have lived in the home together. Appropriate strategies or steps to mitigate these risks were not fully considered before placing these children together, which resulted in increased risks for both children. This has affected children's welfare and hindered some children's progress.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is overseen by a new manager, who was registered by Ofsted in March 2021. The manager is suitably qualified to oversee the home and is supported by an experienced staff team.

The manager has good oversight of documentation held in the home, particularly that of children's care plans. The aims and objectives of the local authority plans for children are clearly monitored and observed. Actions to be taken to meet children's needs are identified. These are used as an area of focus for staff, which supports children to progress.

The manager has transparently recorded all complaints and concerns raised by others, such as neighbours. This has enabled him to provide well-thought-through responses and to take necessary action. This has helped to repair and further improve relationships within the community.

Monitoring and oversight of the home is good. The manager has ensured the requirements from the previous visit have been met. Furthermore, shortfalls identified by external monitoring are addressed quickly. This helps to improve the quality of care provided to children.

Staff working in the home feel well supported by the manager. New members of the team believe they have received good-quality induction and training. They have confidence in the manager and organisation and feel supported to learn and develop.

The manager has a clear vision for future development of the home and is keen to address the shortfalls identified at this inspection.

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
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(b)(c) (2)(a)(xi)) Specifically, use agreed strategies to respond to and communicate with children. Ensure that staff practice does not escalate unsafe or challenging behaviours from children.	5 September 2021
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— 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)) Specifically, that risks posed to children through living with others are thoroughly considered, assessed and mitigated prior to placing children together.	5 September 2021

The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)) In particular, help children, as far as possible, to have planned, positive, experiences of moving out of the home. Leaders and managers should consider steps to be taken to improve children’s experiences when children move from the home in an emergency.	5 September 2021
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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: 1271375

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Steven Lambert

Registered manager: David Hunter

Inspector

Natalie Bennett, Social Care Inspector

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