

2490998

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home and manager registered with Ofsted in May 2024. It is operated by a private organisation.

It provides care for up to five children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and or learning disabilities.

At the time of this inspection, four children were living at the home. The inspector spoke with the children living at the home.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 September 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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: 6 August 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/08/2024	Full	Good
18/10/2022	Full	Good
01/09/2021	Full	Good
11/02/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children living in this home make excellent progress due to the consistently high standards of care provided by a highly skilled staff team. Children's complex and challenging needs are understood and managed well by the managers and staff.

Children receive exceptional, individualised care that provides them with high levels of emotional support and a sense of belonging. The relationships that managers and staff develop with the children enable them to make significant and sustained progress. This alters children's life chances and improves outcomes for their future. For example, one child was pre-verbal prior to moving into the home and they are now able to speak a variety of words.

The registered manager promotes an impressive ethos of advocating for children's rights which is reflected in staff's practice. One child experienced difficulties accessing a social group. The management team went above and beyond to advocate for the child by communicating their wishes and feelings, while also escalating the concerns. The manager's commitment and tenacity in addressing this has led to a positive outcome for the child being able to access the group.

Staff develop creative ways to engage children and support their return to education. All children except one are accessing full time education. One child has been out of education for a long period of time prior to moving into the home. The child is now attending education on a one-to-one basis with a tutor until a more suitable provision can be found. Staff are proactive in encouraging children to have positive routines and support educational experiences both in the home and the community.

Staff prioritise children's health needs. As a result, staff proactively encourage and support the children to attend all routine health appointments. Staff work closely with healthcare professionals to ensure that children's health needs are met. The provider's therapy team support some children on a one-one basis and provide support and guidance to the staff on how best to meet the children's complex needs and ensure that the children's emotional health needs are met.

The managers and staff encourage the children to spend time with people who are important to them. The registered manager and staff have excellent relationships with family members. This supports children to maintain their sense of identity and belonging. One parent said, 'I think [name of child] has improved tremendously, they are happy, and they like it, they get on well with the carers.'

The manager and staff provide children with positive endings to their time living at the home. The level of commitment shown to the children is admirable. Managers and staff carefully consider children's individual needs to support their development. This includes

independence skills and managing children's moves well. This effective support helped one child move to an adult service with fewer restrictions in place.

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

Managers and staff have a comprehensive understanding of the children's risks, vulnerabilities and complex needs. Robust risk management plans and strategies are in place that are regularly reviewed and updated to guide staff to manage behaviours effectively and support the children.

Staff understand their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. They have an empathetic approach irrespective of behaviours that may present as a challenge to them. This helps children to develop trust in the staff and their ability to keep them safe. Children spoken to say they are happy living at the home and they enjoy spending time with the staff on holiday and taking part in activities.

Staff complete safeguarding training and regularly discuss safeguarding issues in team meetings and supervisions. Records demonstrate that these meetings are reflective and provide staff with the opportunity to discuss their safeguarding practices. Staff are trained in areas to meet the children's specific needs of the children. For example, Autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Global Development Delay and Learning Disabilities.

There is a thorough response to allegations from managers and staff. Appropriate and relevant communication takes place with professionals and the local authority designated officer. The manager takes a proactive response. Children are helped to understand any allegations will be taken seriously and investigated. The manager ensures that children and involved adults are kept updated and supported throughout.

Children do not go missing from home. This is due to the positive relationships the staff have built with the children.

Incidents of physical intervention are rare. The staff team know the children well and are exceptional at using de-escalation and distraction techniques to support the children when they are in crisis. When physical intervention has occurred, this has been a last resort and considered to be necessary and proportionate to keep children and staff safe.

Risks to children have reduced due to the positive and exceptional changes they achieve with consistent input, support and guidance from the staff team. One professional said, 'All I can say is that during the time here [name of child] has made fantastic progress. They are a complex young person, and the staff manage their needs extremely well.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Children and staff benefit from an extremely knowledgeable, experienced and qualified manager. The manager is supported by an equally dedicated deputy manager and team leaders. They share goals and have high aspirations for the children in their care. They

focus on staff-development and share research and learning opportunities with the staff to improve their understanding of children's needs.

The management team have instilled a culture of kindness and child-centred practice with firm boundaries and routines. They actively look to further their understanding of the children's behaviour and needs and find new and creative ways to improve the quality of children's lives.

Research based practice is a strong point in this home. Research is implemented at every opportunity to ensure that the best possible outcomes are achieved for the children. For example, the Kaizen approach (Japanese Philosophy) is used to support a child to make incremental improvements and to be more organised. Creative arts and Narrative therapy approaches coupled with Nature-based therapy are used to encourage independent thinking, symbolic representation and nonverbal expression. This allows the children to be creative and express themselves and share their views and ideas.

Children benefit from a consistent and experienced staff team. The staff communicate effectively. Staff are encouraged to talk about their well-being, how the management team can support them and to identify training needs. New staff who join the team are given a thorough induction into the role and the needs of the children. As a result, staff feel valued, staff turnover is low and morale is high.

One professional said, 'I would just like to say the managers and staff at the home are fantastic they have made placing my first child out of authority as smooth as possible. It was daunting; however, they have made it easy, seamless, and knowing [name of child] is well cared for and the progress they are making has made the process much easier.'

One requirement and one recommendation raised at the last inspection are met.

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: 2490998

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Registered provider address: 2 Barton Close, Grove Park, Enderby, Leicester LE19 1SJ

Responsible individual: Grace Cookson

Registered manager: Caroline Allen

Inspector

Julie Elder, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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