

SC2495513

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care for up to two children who may experience social or emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2020.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 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: 21 September 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/09/2021	Full	Outstanding
05/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/05/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children living in this home are making good progress from their individual starting points. They have positive relationships with the staff team, who provide unwavering support. Children who have been supported to move out of the home remain in touch with the staff.

Children's interests and hobbies are nurtured and encouraged. Children are provided with opportunities to attend a variety of groups and social activities, including wakeboarding, swimming and the cinema. Both children have a keen interest in boxing and attend the local gym. This promotes children's self-esteem and widens their social networks.

Children are supported to spend time with those who are important to them. Staff maintain close links with families, ensuring that they feel welcome in the home.

Both children living in the home attend school and their achievements are celebrated by the staff team. However, when children have experienced temporary exclusions from school they have not been encouraged and supported to complete schoolwork. There are no formal plans in place to guide the staff team as to how to support children when they are excluded from school.

Children are supported to maintain their health needs and are registered with all relevant health professionals.

Children's plans are detailed and specific to their individual needs. However, recording shortfalls were identified during this inspection. Plans are not always accurately updated to reflect the children's current circumstances. This reduces opportunities for consistent practice in the home.

The home is generally presented to a good standard and children are encouraged to personalise their space. However, some areas are tired and in need of redecoration. In addition, repairs do not always take priority. The manager and staff discussed an ongoing issue of a leaking roof, resulting in damp and regular 'paint touch-ups'. This standard is not acceptable for children and has the potential to impact on their long-term health.

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

Children's risk management plans are detailed and comprehensive. In addition to risk management plans, the manager has also implemented easy-to-follow guidance for incidents such as substance misuse and knife crime. These documents give a step-by-step guide to staff to ensure that children are consistently supported during and after significant incidents.

Although children do not frequently go missing from the home, there have been some incidents of them going missing from home. On these occasions, the staff team have taken the necessary action to locate children. However, during a recent incident of a child going missing, the staff failed to follow the home's procedure. As a result, there was a delay in the child being reported as missing to the police. The manager has put a plan in place for further training to support the development of staff's practice.

Sanctions are rarely used in the home. However, when they have been used, the manager has not consistently reviewed the effectiveness of the sanction or identified whether it was proportionate. This is a missed opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of sanctions.

Behaviour management in the home is effective. Children receive support from both the staff team and the organisation's therapist to effectively manage their behaviour. Following all incidents, children are given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and identify what can be done to support them in the future. Because of the unwavering and nurturing support that children receive in the home, restrictive physical intervention has not been required.

Staff support and educate children through direct work sessions. Children have completed training to educate them on knife crime and internet safety. To support the direct work delivered by staff on the dangers of substance misuse, staff have worked with external professionals to develop and build on their own understanding of the dangers associated with substance misuse.

Children understand how to complain and say that they feel listened to when they are not happy. Children feel valued in the home and are encouraged to share their views and wishes.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has been led by an experienced manager since the last inspection. The manager and staff team demonstrate aspirations for the children and are passionate about supporting their progress.

Team meetings take place regularly with both the staff team and lead practitioners. Meetings are an opportunity used by the manager to deliver additional training and discuss research-informed practice around areas that are relevant to the children, such as domestic violence and the impact on children's development.

Staff receive regular supervision, and this is a further opportunity for them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children. Appraisals have also been completed and these demonstrate a clear focus on staff development and support. However, the manager has not sought feedback as part of the appraisal process.

The quality of recording in the home is generally good. However, a more-robust monitoring system is required by the manager to ensure that he is able to identify

shortfalls without delay and that records are reviewed and updated with the most factual and accurate information. In addition, the manager had not identified that children did not have up-to-date local authority care plans in place. The manager took immediate action in resolving this during the inspection. However, the lack of robust monitoring has the potential to impact on the quality of children's care.

Rotas do not always accurately detail the names of the staff on duty, or the hours worked. The lack of transparency about who is on duty potentially places children at risk in the event that concerns are raised about the quality of care.

One child has moved in to the home since the last inspection. The manager has given consideration to the child's needs and how these can be met by the team. However, he has failed to demonstrate how similar risks between children will be managed effectively. The manager has also not consulted with the child who was already living in the home or the existing child's social worker. The manager acknowledged the importance of this in strengthening the home's admission process. In addition, the manager had also failed to accurately complete the home's admissions register for both children.

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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v)(viii)(b)) Specifically, the manager must ensure that when children are temporarily excluded from school there are plans in place to support and promote education. In addition, the manager must ensure that children are supported to attend school, and the day-to-day staffing of the home does not impact on a child's attendance.	5 May 2023
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	5 May 2023

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child’s health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d)) This specifically relates to general maintenance of the home and addressing the leaking roof.	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(1)(f)(h)) Specifically, the manager must ensure that there is robust oversight of children’s plans, and that they are accurately reviewed and followed by the staff team.	5 May 2023
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy (“the behaviour management policy”) which sets out— The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and	5 May 2023

within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)— has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (1) (3)(a)(b)(ii)) Specifically, the manager must ensure that consequences have management oversight within regulatory timescales	
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children’s home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b)) Specifically, the manager should ensure that the home’s admission and discharge book is kept up to date. The manager must also ensure that rotas are accurately recorded, contain no gaps and detail the hours of working for all staff.	5 May 2023

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: SC2495513

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: David Lahey

Registered manager: Chris Paraskeva

Inspector

Kelly McCurdy, Social Care Inspector

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