

2504082

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. The home provides care for up to two children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home.

The home has had no registered manager since December 2023.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 31 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/01/2023	Full	Good
21/07/2021	Full	Good
12/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
05/09/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children living in the home receive warm and nurturing care from a staff team who are focused on developing strong and positive relationships with them.

Children experience planned moves into and from the home which are managed sensitively by the staff. Since the last inspection, one child has moved to an alternative provision and one child has moved on to semi-independence.

Staff support children to attend education and have high aspirations for their learning. Staff communicate effectively with children's schools, which ensures that any barriers to learning are quickly identified. When children have not engaged with education, staff have been creative in identifying alternative education provisions.

Staff have developed positive relationships with the children's families and support them to spend time together. This helps children to maintain relationships that are important to them.

Children are registered with health professionals and appointments are made as necessary. Children are supported by staff to lead healthy lifestyles and have balanced diets.

Children are provided with opportunities to engage in activities inside and outside the home. Staff ensure that activities relating to children's interests are promoted. Children's views are regularly sought by staff. However, it is not always recorded how these views are acted on.

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

Staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding procedures, which means that they know what to do when concerns arise. Care plans and assessments identify risks and include actions for staff to take to reduce the impact of these on children. Regular multi-agency meetings take place to monitor identified risks.

Children receive regular support from an in-house therapist. The therapist works closely with staff, which ensures they understand children's therapeutic needs. As a result, children receive care from staff who use a therapeutic approach in their practice. This has further supported positive relationships between staff and the children.

Staff have the skills to support children and to de-escalate situations when needed. This means physical interventions are rarely used. When physical interventions are used, the manager evaluates these incidents to identify any learning on how to better support the children. Occasionally, the staff's approach to using physical intervention has not been consistent. However, the manager has addressed incidents with staff members when he has felt alternative approaches could have been used.

The home has clear boundaries and routines in place to help children understand acceptable behaviours. This provides children with safe care. Praise and rewards are used regularly to promote positive behaviour. Occasionally, consequences are used. However, these are not always effective in achieving the intended outcome and some have not been restorative in nature.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The previous registered manager left the home in December 2023 and all permanently employed staff members left with him. The home remains in a period of transition due to staffing changes. Staff have been appointed to the vacancies, but some are yet to start work at the home. This means children have not yet fully developed their relationships with the staff team.

A new manager has recently been appointed, who is enthusiastic and has made attempts to prepare children for the significant staffing changes in the home. The turnover of staff has impacted on children and has contributed to them displaying some heightened behaviours. Staff responses to some of these behaviours have not always been consistent.

Staff engage in a range of mandatory training and receive supervision from the manager, which is supportive and reflective. However, there is currently no formal development plan in place which would reflect the manager's vision for the home and areas for further development.

The manager does not record when he is on shift in the home. This means that there is not an accurate record kept of who is present in the home.

Staff have generally positive experiences of working in the home and say that they feel supported by the manager. Team meetings take place on a regular basis. They are well attended and staff are engaged in the process.

The home is beginning to develop good working relationships with children's families and partner agencies. Professionals who are involved with the children currently living in the home are complimentary about the standard of care provided. Family members also say their experience of working with the home has been positive, with one parent commenting that staff 'have the best interests of the children at heart'.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards.' The registered person must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home (Regulation 13 (2)(e)(h)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that there is a rota in place for him and all staff. This also specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that there is a workforce development plan in place.	2 April 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted on, specifically, following children's meetings. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- The registered person should ensure that any consequences used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

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: 2504082

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

Registered provider address: The Forge, Church Street West, Woking, Surrey
GU21 6HT

Responsible individual: Amber Steib

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Carrie Mayes, Social Care Inspector

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