

2529355

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is one of several homes operated by a private provider. It provides care for one child who experiences social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in August 2019, and the manager registered in December 2022.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 October 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: 7 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/02/2023	Full	Good
13/01/2022	Full	Good
05/02/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The manager and staff have built a good relationship with the child over a period of time. They encourage the child to share their views, wishes and feelings about their care. The manager and staff have high aspirations for the child and provide a caring and nurturing environment for them.

The manager and staff work collaboratively and creatively with a variety of professionals, such as social workers, health specialists and educators, to support the child to access health appointments and education.

The child's plans are individualised, understood and followed by staff. This means that the child is receiving consistent care that meets their needs. The child has made some slight progress. However, this is good progress from the child's starting point, specifically in the areas of social engagements, relationship building, emotional regulation, personal hygiene and life skills.

The manager and staff do not have access to the child's most recent personal education plan (PEP). This would support the staff in understating the child's educational needs and the support that is required.

Staff support the child to see their family and friends. Staff have good relationships with family members and parents of the child's friends, which supports the child to maintain relationships with people who are important to them.

A family member gave positive feedback to the inspector and said, '[Name of child] is cared for well and has everything they need. They have definitely improved since living at [name of home].'

The home is furnished and decorated to a good standard. It is clean, tidy and free of hazards. However, the staff routinely lock the laundry room door, so the child cannot access the room freely to complete their laundry.

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

The safety and welfare of the child are at the centre of the staff's practice. This helps staff to keep children safe. The child's risk assessment and positive behaviour support plan address their vulnerabilities and include clear strategies for staff to follow.

The child is settled in the home. Incidents are rare. However, when they do occur, staff respond effectively to ensure everyone's safety. Staff are able to effectively de-escalate incidents. Consequently, staff have not had to hold the child to keep them safe or seek support from the emergency services.

On one occasion, the child has been missing from care. Staff responded in line with protocols and were successful in returning the child back home safely. An independent missing-from-care interview was requested and escalated to the local authority by the manager. However, this did not take place. This was a missed opportunity to speak to the child to see if they had any worries or concerns or to identify triggers for their risk-taking behaviour.

Staff use key-work and individual work sessions to inform the child of the dangers around social media, substance misuse and self-injurious behaviours. This helps the child to keep themselves safe. The child has significantly reduced their self-injurious behaviour since moving into the home.

Professionals spoken to who work closely with the child have no concerns about the child's safety. One professional said, 'We see [name of child] becoming more of themselves and forming relationships with staff. [Name of home] is the one place they have made progress over the past few months, more than they have ever made before. If I could replicate the care elsewhere, I would.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has the relevant residential management qualification and experience. He holds the child in high regard and is passionate about the development of the staff team. Shortfalls identified at the previous inspection have been addressed.

The manager has an experienced, stable staff team in place. However, due to a number of changes in the organisation, the manager and some of the staff have recently resigned from their positions. At the time of this inspection, they were working their notice period.

Staff morale has been low over recent months due to the changes in the organisation. The manager and staff have worked effectively to reduce the impact of this on the child.

Staff receive regular reflective supervision, training and an annual appraisal in line with procedures. This allows the manager and staff to reflect on their practice to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the child. Staff also receive additional training tailored to meet the individual needs of the child.

Staff spoken to were very positive about the support they receive from the manager. One member of staff said, '[Name of manager] has been brilliant with his support and leadership. It's been great here. Everyone is very knowledgeable and supportive.'

The manager has internal and external monitoring systems in place to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the service. The manager reviews the quality of care at the home on a six-monthly basis and has good oversight of the service. The internal

monitoring would benefit from being strengthened to ensure that documents sent by the local authority, such as PEPs, are received in a timely manner.

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, The 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. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)) This specifically relates to having a copy of the current PEP for the child living in the home.	10 December 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that, just as in a family home, children are able to access all shared areas of their home, unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Specifically, children should be able to access the laundry room freely. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care, the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. The home should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should make the best use of information from internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement, specifically to ensure that the monitoring system picks up shortfalls in regard to the manager receiving documents from the local authority within reasonable timescales. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: 2529355

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Grace Cookson

Registered manager: Brett Noble

Inspector

Julie Elder, Social Care Inspector

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