

# 2531755

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 and managed by private company. It provides care and accommodation for up to three children who may have social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager has been appointed and his application to be Ofsted registered is currently in progress.

### Inspection dates: 14 and 15 March 2023

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>requires improvement to be good</b> |
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| How well children and young people are helped and protected | requires improvement to be good |
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|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | requires improvement to be good |
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of last inspection:** 9 March 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 09/03/2022      | Full            | Good                 |
| 24/02/2020      | Full            | Good                 |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good**

Shortfalls identified in how well children are helped and protected and the effectiveness of leaders and managers mean that children's overall experience and progress are not consistently good. Since the last inspection, there has been significant changes to the management arrangements and staffing at the home. This means that care provided to the children is not yet good enough. One professional felt that the lack of continuity of care has slowed one child's progress down.

The children currently living in the home are making progress. The children say that they like living in the home and wish to remain living there until they reach independence.

Staff could not successfully engage one child who previously lived at the home. The inspector found that the child became isolated within the home and spent a lot of time in their bedroom. The child did not spend much time with the group and staff did not consistently encourage them to do so. One staff member said that 'they [child] were let down both internally and externally'. This means that not all children are supported to form strong and trusted relationships with staff. The care provided to this child was not good enough.

Children currently living in the home are being supported with their independence skills. One child is learning to cook and wash his own clothes, and is supported to spend time safely in the community with friends. Younger children are encouraged to play and have staff read books to them at bedtime. This means that the children in the home are being supported to grow and develop at a pace that is right for them.

Children living in the home attend education. On days when children do struggle to attend, the staff encourage them with appropriate incentives. One child said, 'Before I came here [the home] I did not go to school much, but now I go lots.' This ensures that children are given the best chance of achieving their full educational potential.

The home, although it feels homely, looks tired and the internal areas of the home require some repair and redecoration. The children's bedrooms are in the process of being redecorated, but the walls are bare and lack personalisation. The manager recognises the work that needs to be done and has started to make plans. Essential repair work will help children to feel valued and create a greater sense of belonging to this home.

Children say that, more recently, they have been involved in different activities and are encouraged to join clubs. The children have been supported to attend football stadium tours, trampolining, adventures parks, themed nights and more. One child

said, 'He [the new manager] likes to keep us fit.' The manager and staff take an active interest in the children's hobbies, such as going to watch their weekly football matches. This helps children to be active and healthy while having fun.

**How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good**

Staff respond to children who go missing in line with the local police and local authority missing protocols. However, it is of significant concern that one child was able to leave the home in the early hours of the morning without the waking night staff's knowledge. The child was missing from the home for several hours before the staff became aware of this. When the child returned home, not all necessary measures were taken to prevent this from happening again. For example, not all windows were fitted with restrictors until some weeks later. This means that not all staff have responded to the risk of harm to children.

Very few physical interventions take place in the home. When they do, it is only because they are necessary. However, most physical interventions are not recorded until several days later. There is no evidence of a purposeful debrief provided for the child or staff from the manager. One record showed that the debrief of the child was completed by the staff member who had held him. This does not provide the child with the opportunity to share any concerns that they may have. Effective debriefs help both children and staff to reflect on the incident, repair any harm caused, and learn how to reduce the risk of future incidents.

Children's risk assessments are detailed and regularly updated when the risk changes. Clear instructions are recorded to help staff to recognise how best to manage risk behaviours. Most children are supported to understand their risk behaviours, such as road safety and online safety, in one-to-one sessions,. However, for one child, not all missing episodes were followed up in one-to-one sessions. This means that not all children are provided with the knowledge to help to keep themselves as safe as possible.

Children currently living in the home say that they feel safe. Children were observed to have strong and trusted relationships with staff. Although the manager is still new, the children spoke positively of him, and they feel that he is there to help them. This means that children are relaxed and comfortable around the home, and that they are confident to be themselves.

Not all risks are considered before children move in to the home. The manager completes a risk assessment, but these do not consistently evaluate the impact of these risks on either the child coming into the home or those who already live there. Therefore, it is not clear how the decision for children moving in to the home has been reached.

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

Staff say that this has been a difficult period for the home. The changes in leadership and management has made them feel, at times, that they do not want to be in work. It is recognised by senior managers that their oversight has not been as it should. This has led to significant staff changes in the home, and has resulted in a lack of continuity of care for the children.

Management monitoring and review systems have not been successful in identifying shortfalls. This has resulted in significant gaps in supervision, staff appraisals, and children's documents. This means that leaders and managers have not been successful in continuously reviewing the quality of care provided by the home.

A new manager has been appointed to the home, and in the short time that he has been in the home, staff say that they feel more positive and valued at work. One staff member said, 'In the short time that he [manager] has been in the home, I have already seen vast improvements, and he [manager] is very child focused.' The new manager is working hard to improve the team's motivation by 'getting back to basics'. This will help staff to feel more supported and confident in their role of caring for the children.

The new manager is passionate about this home. He has high aspirations for the children and the staff. He recognises the areas for development, and he feels that he has the support of senior leaders to achieve this. The staff team are now starting to feel happier and more valued at work. This means that the children will benefit from being cared for by staff who want to be at work.

The independent visitor is not seeking the views of parents or carers, and the views of the children are also not consistently sought. This means that the home's independent report does not offer consultation from children or people who are most important to them. The manager must, with consent, support the independent visitor to obtain the views of children and their parents or carers. This will help to support the home's overall development plan.

## 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      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(iii))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 30 April 2023 |
| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child.</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (2)(e)(h))</p> | 30 April 2023 |
| <p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 30 April 2023 |

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| <p>that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>that arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>ensure the effective induction of each child into the home;</p> <p>manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                      |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>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—</p> <p>the name of the child;</p> <p>details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> <p>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")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered</p> | <p>30 April 2023</p> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <p>person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.</p> <p>(Regulation 35<br/>(3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv))</p>                                                                                                                                             |               |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that —</p> <p>when the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (2)(a))</p> | 30 April 2023 |

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children. They will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. In particular, the registered person should repair the wear and tear in the home and redecorate the areas of the home that look tired. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person must ensure that all staff have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. This appraisal should take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. As part of the performance management process, poor performance should be addressed by a timely plan to bring about improvement. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

## 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:** 2531755

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Sandcastle Care Ltd

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

**Responsible individual:** Claire Holtby

**Registered manager:** James Agus

## Inspector

Jo Birtwhistle, Social Care Inspector

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