

2531755

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated and managed by a private company. It provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, two children were living at the home.

A manager is in post but is not yet registered with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 29 November 2023

Date of last inspection: 1 June 2023

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Outcome from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Findings from the inspection

The registered manager has moved on from the organisation. A new manager has been recruited and they are seeking registration with Ofsted. The manager has quickly learned about the needs of the service, which ensures that the children receive more consistent care.

The independent visitor's reports are thorough and insightful. The independent visitor's evaluation and objectivity have supported the manager to address various shortfalls. This process has promoted improved levels of accountability and transparency over the care of the children.

The organisation has reviewed the induction process for new managers and carers. This step has improved the quality of induction. In doing so, new employees and carers who have been promoted are better supported to learn and apply their role.

The manager has improved the flow of information between the carers. This has resulted in the children experiencing a consistent level of care. Additionally, the carers make best use of team meetings and are clear on the agreed outcomes associated with the children's care. However, for one child, this was not their experience and they moved on from the home prematurely.

The organisation's internal processes do not support the manager to quickly reduce the children's known risks. The manager's attempts to buy fire retardant furnishings were laboured by the organisation's internal processes. This significantly hindered the manager's ability to better protect the children and the carers.

Although the manager gives clear verbal direction for the carers to better manage risk, there are several generalisations in the children's written records. Consequently, the carers cannot rely on the children's plans or risk assessments to give clarity around the children's support needs.

The quality of the carers' recordings in the children's written records is mixed. Some of the carers' recordings of significant events are clear and give insightful context. On the contrary, other recordings are lengthy, have unnecessary detail and are unhelpful to the children and the manager.

There are rigorous processes in place to check the identification of agency care staff. The manager confirms the information from other agencies, which is good practice and keeps children safer. However, the organisation does not seek references when existing carers have briefly left their employment with the organisation and

returned. This undermines the safer recruitment process and does not meet the regulation.

Some of the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection have been carried forward. This is due to some of the shortfalls and areas for improvement not being extensively covered during this inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/06/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/03/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
09/03/2022	Full	Good
24/02/2020	Full	Good

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— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(c)(e)(f)(g)(i)(h))	1 January 2024
The care planning standard is that children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a))	1 January 2024

The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children’s home; if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. The registered person may permit an individual to start work at the home despite the fact that the requirement in paragraph (3)(d) has not been met if— the registered person has taken all reasonable steps to obtain full information about each of the matters in Schedule 2 in respect of the individual, but the enquiries in relation to any of the matters in paragraphs 3 to 6 of Schedule 2 are incomplete; the registered person considers that the circumstances are exceptional; and the registered person ensures that the individual is appropriately supervised while carrying out the individual’s duties, pending receipt of any outstanding information on the matters in paragraphs 3 to 6 of Schedule 2, which is then considered satisfactory by the registered person. The registered person must take reasonable steps to ensure that any individual who is working at the home and who does not fall within paragraph (2)(a) and (b) is appropriately supervised while carrying out the individual’s duties. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(d) (7)(a)(c)(d) (8))	1 January 2024
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets children’s needs. Children’s home will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. In particular, the registered person should report all repair work and consider hanging children’s bedroom doors without weight-bearing self-closers that also meet fire regulations. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)

- The registered person should consider the use of an independent advocate if the child's placing local authority is not meeting their child's needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2531755

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: Penelope Rafferty

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Steve Guirey, Social Care Inspector

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