

2537060

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care for up to two children.

The registered manager post is vacant.

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

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 August 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: 1 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/02/2023	Full	Good
10/01/2022	Full	Good
18/02/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children are cared for by staff who know them well and speak warmly and knowledgeably about them. The staff build good and meaningful relationships with the children. One external professional said that the staff are 'fully committed' to their child and provide them with stability. Another professional said their child is 'thriving' and staff have supported them to develop their feelings of self-worth.

Staff support the children to maintain good physical health. The children are encouraged to eat healthily and attend all their health appointments. One child's eyesight prescription has improved due to staff encouraging them to wear their glasses all the time.

The children are attending school. The staff have been proactive in supporting one child back into education. This is helping them to achieve their educational targets.

The children enjoy a range of activities, including going to the gym, cycling and dog walking. This is providing the children with an opportunity to develop their social skills and resilience.

Staff support the children to see their family and friends. This is a real strength of the staff. Family and friends are welcome in the home, and staff facilitate overnight stays for the children with family members. A child recently enjoyed a holiday abroad with his family due to a staff member accompanying them. This helps the children to maintain their identity and continue to spend quality time with the people who are important to them.

Individual work is carried out with children on important issues, such as school routines, family time and loss. The children's views, wishes and feelings are ascertained. However, the records do not always evidence how these are acted on.

Staff support the children to carry out daily tasks independently, in line with their individual needs, for example, cooking, managing their personal care and travelling on public transport. This is helping the children to prepare for adult life.

The home's therapist visits regularly and spends time with the children individually. The therapist supports the staff in delivering person-centred care to the children. This is helping to ensure that children are cared for by resilient and well-informed staff who can meet their individual needs and keep them safe.

The children have a memory book of their time in the home. This supports them to reflect on their experiences and progress. However, the books are not always kept up to date.

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

The children living in the home say that they feel safe. They say that they can talk to staff about any worries they have. The children know how to make a complaint.

Assessments of risk and behaviour management plans are detailed and understood by staff. This ensures that staff take the right action when children go missing from the home. For example, staff make every effort to contact and locate the child, working closely with the police and the placing authority. Return home interviews are offered by an independent agency on each occasion.

The children receive help and support to manage their behaviour and feelings safely. Staff understand the children's experiences and respond by putting in place appropriate boundaries around what is safe and acceptable. The children understand that the boundaries are there to protect them.

Positive behaviour is consistently promoted. Staff use effective de-escalation techniques, and there have not been any physical interventions. This helps create a positive environment where the children can flourish.

Searches of bedrooms are carried out sensitively by staff. All searches are recorded appropriately. The reasons for the searches are clear and there is management oversight.

Safer recruitment is not always followed for new staff coming into the home. For example, two written references were not obtained for one staff member.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is new to the home; however, she is known to most staff as she already works for the company. She is suitably qualified and intends to apply to Ofsted to register. The manager is child-centred and keen to achieve positive outcomes for the children.

The home is adequately staffed for the children currently living there. There is a stable core staff team in place. When additional staff are required, bank staff who have worked in the home before are used, which helps to ensure consistency for the children.

Staff say they enjoy working in the home and feel well supported by the managers. Team meetings take place each month and staff receive regular supervision. However, the supervision records do not always evidence that the staff have had an opportunity to reflect on their practice and the children's needs on an individual basis. This limits the manager's understanding of staff's strengths and areas for development.

Monitoring and review systems are in place. However, information in some of the children's records is not up to date. This means that the manager and staff cannot

always identify and act on shortfalls to improve the quality of care that the children receive.

Staff receive training to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and meet the children's needs. However, not all staff have completed training related to the children's individual needs, specifically, attachment, trauma and mental health.

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 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; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the 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. Information required in respect of persons seeking to carry on, manage or work at a children's home: Two written references, including a reference from the person's most recent employer, if any. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d) Schedule 2 (3)) This relates to the registered person ensuring that two written references are always obtained when recruiting staff to work in the home.	31 October 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's plans contain relevant and up-to-date information. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.1)
- The registered person should ensure that the children's views, wishes and feelings, and the outcome of these being listened to and acted on, are detailed in their records. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)

- The registered person should ensure that all staff receive supervision which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children in their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that staff encourage children to keep appropriate mementoes of their time living at the home, including an up-to-date memory book. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)
- The registered person should ensure that the staff engage in training specific to the children's individual needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.5)

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: 2537060

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: Penelope Rafferty

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Dawn Walker, Social Care Inspector

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