

2581296

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. It is registered to provide care for one child. The statement of purpose states that the home has been developed to offer a service to children who may benefit from living in a smaller, single-child residential setting. It provides short-term, individual therapeutic care.

The home has been without a registered manager since July 2021. The current manager is registered with Ofsted at another home within the same company.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We visited this setting on 10 February 2021 and 30 March 2021 to carry out monitoring visits. The reports are published on the Ofsted website. This is the home's first full inspection.

Inspection date: 26 October 2021

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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection:

We visited this setting on 10 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. Serious safeguarding concerns were identified at this visit that resulted in two compliance notices being issued, in respect of regulations 12 and 13. We carried out a further monitoring visit to the home on 30 March 2021 to consider actions taken in relation to the compliance notices. Inspectors found that there had been sufficient action taken by the manager to meet the notices.

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

One child lives at this home. The child has developed positive relationships with friendly and nurturing staff. This is helping the child feel secure and settled. The child said that he really likes the staff and would give the home a '10 out of 10' rating. Throughout the day, a lot of laughter and gentle banter was observed between the child and staff, contributing to a happy living environment.

The complexities of the child's needs are known and understood well by staff. The child receives good individualised support and care from staff and the in-house therapist. This is helping the child to build emotional resilience and gradually overcome previous experiences of neglect and trauma as staff support him to communicate more.

Healthy eating is encouraged by staff. The child likes fruit and is now willing to eat certain vegetables as part of his daily diet, which he would previously refuse. Staff provide the child with a range of fun activities and new experiences to stimulate his interests. For example, he enjoys trips out to the trampolining centre and the cinema. This is helping the child build his social skills when out in the community and to grow in confidence.

Staff actively encourage the child's participation in education and have high aspirations for him. However, the level of engagement in any meaningful educational activity, including home tuition, is limited. There have been delays in establishing a suitable school for the child due to the complexity of his needs. However, the manager is proactive in challenging the authorities and has identified an alternative education provision that may best suit his needs.

Staff support the child in spending time with family members, including regular contact with his sister, but this does not extend to all his siblings, which is not in line with his care plan. Staff organised a trip to Blackpool with a trusted friend, which was a positive experience. Staff support the friendship, which is helping the child form a positive peer relationship with someone who is important to him.

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

Staff give the child's safety high priority. They provide him with extensive support and guidance on areas of protection, such as internet safety and sexual health, raising awareness of his own safety and that of others. They are sensitive in their approach and response to concerns surrounding meetings with family members. The child feels safe living at the home and knows that staff are there for him if he needs to talk. This is positive, in that he is trusting the adults who care for him.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the risk factors, considering his past experiences. They ensure that they follow the strategies recorded in the risk assessment designed to keep the child safe inside and outside the home. Staff show a good awareness of the strategies to follow when the child goes missing from care, and associated triggers. Records seen reflect the actions taken by staff, including carrying out physical checks of the area and alerting the relevant agencies, such as the police. Incidents of the child going missing from home are reducing significantly, because the staff are consistently carrying out follow-up work with the child and reinforcing the importance of his own personal safety.

Staff ensure that the child's social worker is kept informed of incidents and events affecting the child. The social worker gave positive feedback, saying staff are helping the child stay safe and that good, nurturing care is being provided. She said, 'The last looked after children meeting was the best I have attended. I am amazed with the work that the therapist is doing with the child and the positive impact this is having.'

Staff reinforce positive behaviour and have put in place boundaries suitable for the child's age. The child is responding well. Staff recognise good behaviour. For example, the child was given verbal praise for behaving well at the cinema and being polite to staff. This is a particular milestone, as he would not have achieved this previously. During the inspection, staff were able to coax a child to attend a dental appointment by offering an incentive, after previous attempts had failed.

Strategies for supporting the child to manage his behaviour are working well. As a result, there has been no reason to hold the child since he has lived in this home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by an experienced manager who is passionate about his role and is child centred. He knows the child well and has a good understanding of the child's needs and the progress made since placed at the home.

The staff team is settled after a period of change. There is less reliance on agency staff and more experienced members, including a deputy manager, have joined the team. The continuity of staffing is helping the child form secure attachments. Staff are enthusiastic and highly committed to the child they care for.

Staff receive regular supervision sessions from the manager and deputy manager, which gives them the opportunity to reflect on their practice and discuss their training needs. All staff have completed mandatory training and a good range of non-mandatory training. However, as part of his monitoring, the manager has not ensured that night practitioners have received the necessary training in online safety, trauma and attachment.

Staff feedback about the manager's leadership is unanimously positive. One staff member said: 'I have worked with many great staff in previous homes but honestly feel the team and management at the home are the best I have ever worked with

during my career. I feel that the young people's wishes views and feelings are always met and that the team and management go above and beyond to care for the home's current resident.'

There are good communication systems in place. Daily handovers and team meetings ensure that staff are kept informed about anything they need to know about the child's day-to-day needs and any emerging risks.

The home is kept secure and maintained to a good standard. The child willingly showed the inspector his bedroom, which was in a tidy and clean condition. The child chose the wallpaper and the colour scheme, which has given him a sense of ownership and pride. This demonstrates good consultation and positive engagement.

Overall, the quality of record-keeping is good. However, improvements can be made to the manager's evaluation of incidents in making sure that there is robust oversight of staff's actions to capture any lessons learned. Furthermore, records lack objectivity and are not always written from a child-centred perspective.

The requirements set at the previous monitoring visit in March 2021 are met.

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
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— understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(iv)(viii)) This specifically relates to ensuring that there are clear structures and programmes of activities in place during normal school hours that have an educational base, giving the child every chance to engage in positive learning experiences while waiting for a suitable education provision to be identified.	24 December 2021
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.	24 December 2021

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) This specifically relates to ensuring that the manager evaluates the actions of staff in the recording of incidents, to identify any need for improvement, and that all staff, including night practitioners, complete all relevant training, particularly in trauma, attachment and online safety, to support children's needs.	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that, subject to regulation 22 (contact and access to communications), contact between each child and the child's parents, relatives and friends, is promoted in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(d)) This specifically relates to ensuring that children have contact with all siblings, in line with their care plan.	24 December 2021

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff are supported to understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Documents, for example those relating to incidents and support sessions, should be written in a child-centred way. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2581296

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Registered provider address: 49 Whitegate Drive, Blackpool FY3 9DG

Responsible individual: Penelope Rafferty

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Mike Charnley, Social Care Inspector

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