

2582246

Sandcastle Care Ltd

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned and operated by a private provider. It provides care and accommodation for up to two children who may have emotional or behavioural difficulties.

There is a registered manager in post who was registered at the same time as the home in March 2020. The manager has the relevant level 5 qualification.

Inspection date: 8 February 2021

This monitoring visit

This monitoring visit took place as it was registered in March 2020 and has not yet had its post-registration inspection.

Children at this home are settled and are making progress. They both attend their respective education provisions. They engage and invest in staff who care for them. One child is progressing well in learning to become independent. The other child has made fantastic progress in relation to developing secure and trusting relationships. When asked what she liked best about the home, she replied, 'Hugs and squeezes and tickles from [staff name]. I love her.' Managers and staff speak of the children with genuine warmth, pride and affection.

Staff have been motivated and creative in thinking of activities to keep the children occupied during COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdowns. Examples of activities include building models, role play, making bug hotels, undertaking scientific experiments, performing magic tricks, using bath paints and making dens.

There are no concerns in relation to matching. Both children have been in placement since the home was registered (previously it was registered under a different provider). They are well matched and do not have a negative influence on each other. Their large age gap works well, and they relate to each other in sibling-like ways.

Children's risks are understood and mitigated against. One child is staffed at a two-to-one ratio due to her high-level risks and her minimal understanding of personal safety. Another child has reduced her missing-from-home incidents considerably since the start of her placement. A child's risk assessment omitted the risk of fire setting. Although this is believed to be low risk, it is still a potential risk which staff need to be aware of.

Restrictive physical intervention is used on some occasions to keep the youngest child safe. She has spoken to staff involved in the hold about how she feels. The child has not routinely had an opportunity to speak to a person who was not involved in the hold. This is raised as a good practice recommendation.

Staff speak to children about issues that are important to them or affect their safety and well-being. One child identified as non-binary for a period. Staff are not specifically trained to support issues of gender identity. However, there is evidence that they listened to the child's wishes and acted on them accordingly, removing all gender-pronoun references in the child's records.

The home has been through a difficult period in relation to COVID-19. Several staff and the children tested positive. This meant that many staff had to be off work and isolating. Managers, staff and the wider company did their best to minimise disruption during this time. Children did experience some disruption to their care, but every effort was made to provide as much continuity as possible. In general, children benefit from a stable staff team that provides good continuity of care.

A placing social worker spoken to as part of this inspection gave positive feedback. In particular, she commented on the reduced risks and the child being generally happier since she has been living at the home.

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Any child who has been restrained should be given the opportunity express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident, taking the age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint into account. In some cases, children may need longer to work through their feelings, so a record that the child has talked about their feelings should be made no longer than five days after the incident of restraint (regulation 35(3)(c)). Children should be encouraged to add their views and comments to the record of restraint. Children should be offered the opportunity to access an advocacy support to help them with this (regulation 7(2)(b)(iii)). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 50 paragraph 9.60)
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their risk assessment, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2582246

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Penelope Rafferty

Registered manager: Susan Towers

Inspector

Charlie Bamber, Social Care Inspector

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