

2590726

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. It is registered to provide care for up to two children who may have emotional and social difficulties.

The current manager has been registered with Ofsted since July 2020.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 June 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
not applicable	not applicable	not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Two children live at this home. Children build strong and trusting relationships with staff, who know them extremely well. Children speak very highly about their lived experience. One child remarked 'the staff are brilliant' and said that he would give the home 'eleven out of ten'. Children feel highly supported and listened to. Staff act on children's wishes and ensure that they are valued.

Children are making significant progress in their education. Staff have been successful in reintegrating children back into school after there had previously been significant gaps in their attendance. Children have excellent school attendance and are very eager to learn. One child is enjoying their studies so much that he asked for his timetable to be extended. A teacher was highly complimentary about the home's staff and their dedication in supporting children's education.

The systems in place for modifying children's behaviours are highly effective. Children are responding exceptionally well to incentive schemes in place that are resulting in lots of praise and rewards. One of the children, for example, was rewarded with a new pool cue when he achieved set tasks as part of his daily routine. Such strong behaviour management systems boost children's self-esteem and confidence.

Staff successfully engage children in community-based activities. Children take part in fundraising events. One child managed to raise a large sum of money for the 'Christmas Shoe Box Appeal' charity for the homeless. This is helping children show respect and dignity for people less fortunate. The child received a letter from the local mayor congratulating him on this feat. This is a fantastic achievement.

Staff provide an excellent range of fun-filled activities for children to enjoy such as making ice cream and trips to theme parks. There are also educational experiences that feed into their individual interests, such as trips to the National Space Centre and car museums. One child said that he 'cannot wait to go again'. Children are thriving on these opportunities and are eager to learn about the world around them.

Children spend time visiting their families and people important to them, which has increased over time. Staff work proactively with parents to ensure safe contact and continuity of care. Staff are very thoughtful and creative when facilitating family contact, such as organising go-karting activities. Parents speak highly of the staff. One parent commented that staff regularly keep him updated and involved in decisions affecting the child's life.

Children show an excellent insight into the benefits of taking exercise and how this contributes to maintaining positive mental health. One child commented that being involved in activities outdoors such as bike riding helps him to manage his emotions.

There are effective routines in place at night that are helping children relax and sleep well which were absent previously. Staff use innovative ways to help support children attend health appointments and engage with professionals, for example staff helped one child write a letter to the tooth fairy. This has helped the child reduce his fear of the dentist.

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

Staff give children's safety the highest priority. Staff provide excellent means of support and guidance to help children understand risk. For example, staff use research to raise children's awareness of crime, online safety and associated risks. Children are very perceptive of the work undertaken and this is helping them stay safe.

Children flourish through the effective engagement with the in-house therapist and staff. This input has resulted in a significant reduction in behaviours that challenge as children learn to self-regulate.

Children live in a home that is safe and secure. Robust health and safety checks are consistently carried out. The home is exceptionally clean and well decorated. The outside area is impressive with a range of outdoor play equipment that includes a trampoline and table tennis table. Children helped to paint the fence and dining table and chairs as part of the home's development project.

Staff are well trained in safeguarding. They know exactly what to do when they have concerns about the children and take decisive action to safeguard them in their care. For example, staff act quickly when children go missing from care. They exercise great diligence in promoting children's safe return, working effectively with the police and families as part of this process. Incidents have significantly reduced because there are timely follow-up procedures through support sessions completed with the children. Children engage well, listen and trust the staff.

Children have developed a strong sense of responsibility for their own safety and well-being. This is because staff have enabled them to take measured risks to develop age-appropriate skills. There has been a significant increase in the times that one child spends with their family and friends in the community. This is an exceptional achievement, as he travels independently and keeps in contact with staff at the home to let them know he is safe.

Risk assessment and risk management processes are of a high quality. These are regularly updated and kept current. All staff understand and follow the strategies to keep children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Children live in a highly effective and efficiently managed home. Every effort is made to ensure that children receive the best possible care, to support their individual

needs and promote their well-being. The manager is highly motivated, passionate and child centred. The staff team shares the same ethos for achieving the best possible outcomes for children.

An experienced, settled and committed staff team cares for the children. The approach to children is highly nurturing and children are reaping the benefits. For example, the continuity of staffing has resulted in children securing positive attachments.

The manager and staff are very creative and innovative in extending children's education and awareness of safety. For example, they use research to talk to children about discrimination and events from the national calendar such as 'International Day Against Homophobia'. The manager is also a member of the local neighbourhood watch team and uses information from local crime statistics and serious incidents. This is exceptional practice.

Highly effective monitoring of the children means that children are continuously supported to reach their individual goals. The records held in the home are, in the main, of a high standard and show a clear picture of children's achievements. These are complemented by photographic files of children immersed in activities which highlight how well they have progressed in such a short period of time.

The manager is extremely well organised, which means the home runs efficiently. For example, he ensures that staff receive regular supervision and that new members are mentored by the more experienced practitioners. Staff unanimously speak very highly of the manager, and feel well supported and valued.

Very good-quality training gives staff the skills necessary to meet children's very complex needs. Newly recruited staff receive an in-depth induction package that gives them a firm foundation to practise safely and support children in their care.

Effective lines of communication within the team mean that important information about children's needs are shared through the daily handovers and monthly team meetings. Social workers are regularly updated about children's progress in the form of weekly reports. They report that the manager and staff are proactive in sharing information and communicate well.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all staff understand and follow the home's policies and procedures for the benefit of the children in the home's care, in relation to children going missing from care including the strategies to follow. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20)
- The registered person should make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement, in relation to capturing an effective evaluation and critique of the home's practice and how this may impact on outcomes for children from their starting points. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are supported and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording, in relation to improving the quality of recording of support sessions completed with children. ('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: 2590726

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: Steven Lambert

Registered manager: Adam Pickering

Inspector

Michael Charnley, Social Care Inspector

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