

2590732

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to two children with social and emotional difficulties.

There is a registered manager in post. He registered with Ofsted in July 2020.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 18 March 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 January 2022

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: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are positive about their home and the care they receive. Comments made by children reflect the quality of the relationships between staff and children. Children clearly benefit from a skilled and dedicated team that establishes open and honest relationships with them. This fosters mutual respect and trust and enables children to develop reciprocal relationships with others.

Children are physically fit, and their emotional well-being is improving. All children are registered with relevant health services, and they confirm that they are supported to attend routine and specialist appointments.

Access to in-house therapeutic support enables children to begin to address past experiences and current concerns around their emotional health, relationships and behaviour. The therapist also provides support and guidance to staff, enabling them to reflect on, and understand, children's needs and the reasons underpinning their behaviours.

Managers and staff place great value on education and fully promote the importance of learning. Expectations about attendance are clear, and good routines facilitate good levels of engagement. However, managers and staff are not aware of the local offer setting out the support available for children with special educational needs or disabilities. This is a missed opportunity to access resources for children.

Children receive care from staff who are committed and enthusiastic. Consequently, they are supported to engage in a wide range of activities. As a result, children enjoy different experiences and are supported with hobbies and interests. They are provided with opportunities to develop new skills and build their self-esteem and confidence.

Introductions to the home are largely well managed, and practice is reviewed to ensure improvements are made where necessary. However, assessments that consider whether children can be placed in the home need to be strengthened to ensure that all children's needs are considered alongside the skill base of the staff team.

The levels of consultation and communication are high. Staff and children were observed discussing issues and planning events together throughout the inspection. Time is set aside to allow for more formal consultation. For example, one-to-one sessions take place regularly, and family meetings are held weekly. Consequently, children can make choices about menus and activities and contribute to discussions and decisions about care planning.

Staff work hard to build positive relationships with children's families to promote and maintain positive and safe family time. Arrangements can be complex, and staff are

sensitive to this. A child's carer commented, 'The staff are really good. They go out of their way to make sure that we all have a fun time during contact.'

The physical environment is maintained to a good standard and has a homely feel. However, there are locks on the communal living room doors. This detracts from the family home environment the registered manager works hard to achieve.

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

Children say they feel safe and they are safe living in this home. They can identify a trusted adult they can talk to should they have any concerns. Children know how to complain and are confident that when they do this they will be taken seriously. One complaint has been made, and records demonstrate this was robustly addressed.

The selection and recruitment of staff is rigorous and prevents unsuitable adults from being able to work with children. Staff are well trained, and clear about their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe from harm. As a result, any safeguarding concerns are promptly responded to.

All risks are clearly identified and underpinned by robust assessments. Individual support plans in place minimise the risk of situations escalating and provide outline strategies to follow when incidents occur.

Staff understand the risks associated with children who go missing from home. When children do go missing from home, staff take the appropriate action to locate them and ensure their safe return home. Key-work sessions are carried out with the children to highlight the risks to them and the strategies in place to safeguard them. These minimise risks to children, as the sessions give them the strategies to keep themselves safe.

Children report that any sanctions imposed are fair. A restorative approach enables children to recognise the effect of their behaviour on themselves and others. A system of praise and reward ensures that the focus is not solely on negative behaviour.

Occasionally, physical intervention is necessary to prevent significant damage to property or assaults on staff. All incidents are well managed and records are detailed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has been in post since July 2020. He is suitably experienced and qualified, with a level 5 qualification in management.

The home is well managed and organised in children's best interests. The manager demonstrates strong leadership. Professionals describe him as 'committed', 'supportive' and 'an asset to his team'. Consequently, there is a clear ethos in the home which is based on high expectations and aspirational care.

Staff retention has been an issue since registration, with several people leaving the service. Managers do not routinely consult with those leaving to determine their reasons for doing so. Consequently, this does not enable managers to identify any negative trends.

Swift action is taken to recruit new staff, ensuring good staffing levels are maintained to meet children's needs. A core staff team has remained consistent for children. Staff are highly complimentary about the support and guidance they receive from the registered manager.

Regular individual supervision and team meetings, which focus on children's needs and progress, provide opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice. The manager uses supervision well to monitor performance and support individuals to be solution-focused and understand their responsibilities.

A comprehensive training plan is in place that is varied and meets the individual and collective needs of staff. A good training programme means staff are equipped with the necessary skills to meet the complex needs of children in their care.

When partner agencies fall short in their delivery of services to children, the registered manager challenges this. He has escalated concerns within the local authorities and advocates strongly for children.

The registered manager and staff have an excellent understanding of the individual needs of each child and keep placement plans under regular review. As a result, children receive highly individualised care. When there are concerns about progress or significant events occur, the manager liaises effectively with placing authorities to ensure the situation is addressed. When decisions have been made to end a placement, there are clear safeguarding reasons for doing so.

Internal and external quality monitoring takes place regularly. The registered manager is taking account of recommendations made by the independent visitor, and this is helping to continually improve the service.

Appropriate systems are in place to notify Ofsted and other relevant persons of significant events that occur. The quality of information provided is good. This allows the recipient to analyse risk and understand what action is being taken to minimise this. Consequently, people are well informed and this means that children's welfare is promoted.

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) In particular, the registered manager must ensure that robust pre-admission risk assessments are completed which address all children's known risks and needs and staff's skills to manage children's individual needs.	31 March 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should make sure that managers and staff are aware of the local offer setting out the support available for children with special educational needs or disabilities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 26, paragraph 5.4)
- The registered person should monitor and review the patterns and trends of turnover of staff and be able to understand and address any negative trends. Specifically, to identify, where possible, people's reasons for leaving and to act

when necessary. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.19)

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: 2590732

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: David Crow

Registered manager: Joe Clegg

Inspectors

Michelle Edge, Social Care Inspection Manager
Elaine Allison, Social Care Inspection Manager

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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