

2595021

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a number that is operated by a large private organisation. It is registered to provide care for up to two children who experience social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2023.

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 January 2024

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: 14 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/03/2023	Full	Good
09/11/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good-quality care that enables them to make progress from their starting points. Children are held in high regard by staff, which enables children to build positive and trusting relationships with the people that care for them. Children benefit from living in a safe and caring home environment.

Children are receiving therapy that is supporting their emotional well-being. The therapists are an integral part of the team. The therapists also support staff to understand trauma-based behaviours. This results in consistent care being provided to children.

Children are attending education. Staff liaise effectively with schools to support children to attend school and do well in their education. Staff travel some distance to ensure that a child attends the same school they have always attended. This enables established friendships to be maintained. The registered manager is proactive in arranging relevant multi-agency meetings to support children whose attendance requires improvement. This supports children's ongoing learning and development.

Identified shortfalls in the overview of paperwork mean that statutory documents are not on file for some children. Staff do not have access to up-to-date care plans, education, health and care plans and personal education plans. Also, one child's health assessment is out of date. This means that care planning for children is not consistent, which impacts on the quality of care provided.

Children take part in a range of activities, both inside and outside of the home. One child plays for a local football team. One child is now able to go to the shops independently. The home also provides children with the opportunity to have holidays and day trips. One child has been skiing with school and will be going to New York. These experiences help children to build positive memories as well as developing their social skills and interaction.

The physical environment of the home is warm, welcoming and furnished to a good standard. It is made to feel like a family home, with photos and art displayed on the walls.

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

The management of children's risks is effective. Risk assessments are clear and succinct. They include recent risks and provide effective strategies for managing and reducing risks to individual children. One child has seen a significant reduction in risk from high to low relating to substance misuse.

Children have been supported to understand the importance of keeping in touch with staff when they are out in the community. This has enabled children to have more time with their friends, maximising their social interactions. Children do not go missing from this home.

Praise and rewards are used regularly to celebrate and promote positive behaviour. Consequences are rarely used in this home. Direct-work sessions educate children on how to keep safe.

Staff use their positive relationships with children to support and help children to regulate their emotions. This means that staff have not needed to use physical intervention.

Staff receive training to build their skills and knowledge, particularly around safeguarding, so they can keep children safe. Staff also complete training to respond to children's specific needs, for example, staff have completed training on autism and coeliac disease.

Safer recruitment practice at the home ensures that all staff are appropriately checked and vetted before coming to work in the home. This helps to ensure that the home is a safe place for children to live.

Children's safety is supported further by health and safety procedures in the home being robust, clearly monitored and up to date. This helps children to stay safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is run by a committed and dedicated manager who is suitably qualified and experienced. The manager has dual registration to manage two homes. The manager's practice is embedded in a child-centred ethos.

Some of the core staff team, including the previous manager, have left the home. While this has had an impact on continuity of care, the manager has ensured that the children have been supported through these changes. The manager has been able to build meaningful relationships with children in a short space of time.

Staff morale in the home is high, and the home now has a stable staff team. One staff member said about the manager, 'His work ethic and attitude are excellent, and he is always wanting to help both staff and children to be the best that they can be by offering advice, support and encouragement.' Children benefit from this positive environment.

Team meetings take place regularly and are well attended. The agenda is varied but always includes discussions of the children and supports staff to reflect on their practice. This supports staff's learning and development. Staff are benefiting from regular supervision. Records of supervision are of good quality.

Most of the staff hold the relevant childcare qualification. Children benefit from care being provided by experienced and qualified staff members. However, one staff member has exceeded the time expectations to complete this childcare qualification.

The manager continually reviews and monitors systems to ensure their effectiveness and has a good understanding of the strengths and areas of development of the home.

There are good multi-agency partnerships, and staff build effective relationships with those external to the home, both professionals and birth family members. This means children receive holistic care. One birth family member said, 'I have good communication with staff, and they always keep me updated about all aspects of my child's life, and they support family time well.'

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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)) In particular, ensure that any missing statutory documents are on children's files, including care plans, education, health and care plans and personal education plans. Also, ensure that children's health assessments are in date.	14 March 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that they maintain good employment practice. Specifically, they should ensure that staff complete their NVQ level 3 within the expected timescales. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: 2595021

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: Grace Cookson

Registered manager: David Hunter

Inspectors

Nicola Clements, Social Care Inspector
Nicky Forrester, Social Care Inspector

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