

2595620

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private company. It is registered to provide care for two children aged between seven and 16 years. This will be based on the accommodation needs of the individual.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in September 2020.

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

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 June 2021

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: Not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: Not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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Not applicable		
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Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The quality of care provided at the home has made a real difference to the children who live there. The staff demonstrate skill in supporting and promoting the children's progression. The progress that the children have made since living at the home has been good from their starting points.

The home environment is welcoming, comfortable and homely. The children have personalised their home and their bedrooms. Children like their home and take pride in it. It is a comfortable home, where they feel relaxed and happy.

Staff have supported children to make progress in relation to their education. One child had missed significant periods of education before moving to the home. Staff worked closely with education professionals and provided good support for the child. This helped to build the child's confidence, which resulted in them looking forward to returning to school.

The staff record their regular key-work sessions with children. There is a wealth of information recorded about the work completed on matters such as substance misuse, staying safe, education, mental well-being and sexuality. Records provide a good insight into the support provided and the progress made by the children. Good-quality key working has helped to educate children on important matters and has promoted good progress.

Staff have made extensive efforts to try and promote family time for one child who lives far from home. They keep parents up to date with their child's progress and try hard to promote their relationship. One parent described the support they receive from staff as great. Good partnership working with parents has helped the children to settle and make positive progress.

Children reported that they feel listened to and supported by staff. There is extensive evidence of staff communicating and engaging with children in order to gather their views, wishes and feelings. This helps children to feel valued and have a sense of belonging.

Children have been unable to take part in some activities due to COVID-19 restrictions. Activity plans are not structured, and this contributed to some of the children becoming bored and engaging in concerning behaviour.

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

The children have enjoyed placement stability since coming to live in the home. Overall, their individual risk-taking behaviour has reduced. However, some high-risk concerns remain. Staff have a good awareness of these and take the necessary

action to address and reduce the risk. Children stated that they feel safe and supported by staff.

The matching of children has been well considered and well thought out. The manager consults with placing social workers as part of the matching process. This helps to ensure that potential risks are identified, and safety measures are put in place to address them.

Behaviour is managed well by the manager and staff team. The staff are well trained and have good relationships with the children. The manager and staff team are able to identify any subtle changes in the children's behaviour, and respond by putting appropriate support in place. As a result, there have been very few challenging incidents and very few incidents of physical restraint.

Children's risk assessments are up to date. They outline all the known risk factors and set out strategies that staff should follow to reduce known risks. Careful risk evaluation is evident. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed, and management oversight is recorded clearly. Good-quality, up-to-date risk assessments minimise the risk of significant harm.

Staff are recruited safely, and appropriate checks are carried out. There are no concerns in relation to safer recruitment practices. This helps to ensure that children are looked after by people who are appropriate to do so.

Individual staff members have a good awareness of safeguarding. They have access to a number of training courses which underpin their knowledge and understanding. Staff have the knowledge and skills to better protect children from harm.

Missing-from-home protocols are up to date and children's known associates are identified in the protocols. In addition, the protocols give clear direction to staff on what to do and when to report children as missing. Staff make extensive efforts to look for the children when they go missing from the home. Furthermore, close working relationships with other professionals ensure a coordinated and well-managed approach to missing-from-home incidents.

Professionals said that communication with the home is good. Staff keep them informed through regular verbal updates; weekly written reports are provided; and detailed reports are prepared for reviews. Good multi-agency communication provides effective support and protection for children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The team is led by an experienced registered manager who aspires for children and a detailed knowledge of every aspect of the home's operation. He is committed to achieving high standards of care for the children.

Communication with children's social workers and other professionals is good. There is a real sense of a team-around-the-child approach. This collaborative approach provides good support and guidance for the children.

The manager will challenge placing authorities if he perceives that other professionals are not working in a child's best interests. For example, concerns were escalated when there was a delay in a child accessing appropriate education. This has helped to ensure that matters of concern are acted on in a timely manner.

There was clear evidence that the manager and staff promote tolerance, equality and diversity. Key-work records evidenced discussion and work around race, sexuality, equality and diversity issues. Children benefit from staff understanding and promoting their identity.

Staff have access to a range of training and development opportunities. Mandatory training is up to date and the manager is aware of when training requires renewal. The manager also analyses the needs of the children in order to decide whether any training is needed for the staff team to be able to provide appropriate levels of care. For example, additional staff training was put in place to improve the staff's awareness and understanding of how to respond to missing-from-home incidents. This helps to ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge to meet the individual needs of the children.

The staff are very well supported in their roles by the manager, and have regular supervision and team meetings. They participate in regular training. This ensures that staff are well equipped to meet the individual needs of the children placed at the home.

The registered manager has shown ambition and realistic expectations for the children in the home. The manager and staff have good working relationship with schools and are supporting the children to make plans for future education attainment.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff seek to identify and provide appropriate opportunities for children to develop themselves in accordance with their wishes and feelings, and as part of the home's plan for their care. Each child's talents and interests should be understood and nurtured, with children selecting activities based on their personal preferences and abilities, so far as is reasonable. Staff should also support children to try activities that are 'new' for them, where appropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.4)

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: 2595620

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Andrew Rourke

Registered manager: David Craig

Inspector

Brian Wood, Social Care Inspector

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