

1240573

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is one of a number of homes operated by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 May 2017

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

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people receive a very good standard of care that meets their individual needs and enhances their day-to-day lives. Young people, their parents and

external professionals report high levels of satisfaction with the service.

- Young people make good progress across different aspects of their development. For example, they engage in education and positive activities and reduce risky behaviours such as being missing from home.
- Effective joint working with partner agencies promotes young people's safety and well-being and helps to ensure that their individual needs are met.
- Young people enjoy positive relationships with staff. They trust staff and feel safe in their care. Staff take time to listen to young people and act on their views.
- Young people's health needs are identified and addressed in partnership with local services. Individualised therapy programmes provide a valuable contribution to young people's social and emotional development.
- Risks to young people's safety and well-being are clearly identified and carefully managed. As a result, young people are safe and protected from harm.
- Staff are confident in their safeguarding practice. They are able to recognise safeguarding concerns and are fully aware of their responsibilities to take prompt action if concerns about a young person's welfare are identified.
- Staff are skilled in understanding young people's behaviour and emotional responses. Staff support young people to manage their behaviour in a positive and effective way.
- Staff are motivated and have pride in the service. They are well trained and well supported.
- The home is led well by a committed registered manager. The registered manager is approachable and encourages the views and opinions of young people, parents and external professionals.
- The registered manager creates an open and transparent culture, within which people feel able to express their views. Reflective practice is encouraged, which supports the service to constantly improve.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
-----------------	-----------------	----------------------

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people who live in this home receive exceptional care and support, which is closely tailored to their individual needs. This high quality of care enhances their progress and life experiences. Feedback from young people themselves, parents and external professionals is consistently excellent. A young person commented, 'I think it is great living here. I hope I am here until I am 18.' A social worker said, 'I cannot express how impressed I am with this home. [X] has settled so quickly and his relationships with the staff are just brilliant. His progress has been wonderful.'

The stable and consistent staff team helps young people build secure and trusting relationships. Staff know children and young people well and have a good understanding of their needs. Young people engage positively with staff and each other and, as a result, are making good progress in their social and emotional development. When asked what they liked about the home, two young people responded by saying 'the staff'.

Staff support young people to maintain important relationships. Staff are aware of the importance of family contact and facilitate this in line with young people's care plans. Parents' involvement in young people's care is encouraged where appropriate and families are welcomed at the home. One parent said, 'We are always made 100% welcome. We feel completely at home when we visit.'

Young people's views are encouraged and valued. Staff take time to listen to young people and understand the things that are important to them. The registered manager has implemented a child-friendly version of each young person's care plan. This encourages them to express their views about the care and support that they receive. The registered manager has also arranged for an independent advocate to support one young person to share his feelings about his care with his placing authority. Listening to young people's views and acting on them lets them know that they are valued, and gives them a say about the service they receive.

Staff engage in good-quality direct work with young people. Direct work sessions are thoughtfully planned and address areas that are important to young people. Staff take time to plan direct work to ensure that it is meaningful, which means young people are more likely to engage with it and benefit from it. In some circumstances, the home's therapist works with staff when they are planning key worker sessions to help ensure that they are of maximum benefit to the young people.

Staff ensure that young people are supported to enjoy good health. All young people's routines or specific healthcare needs are managed effectively in partnership with community healthcare services. Staff support young people to learn about and adopt healthy lifestyles. One young person spoke of the positive lifestyle changes he had made, for example his diet and exercise regime, as a result of positive support from staff. He said, 'I'm learning how to eat right and I'm going to be well fit.'

Young people have ongoing access to the home's therapy services. Therapists work closely with support staff to help ensure that the work they carry out with young people

is complemented on a day-to-day basis. There is positive joint working with external specialists such as mental health workers, which means young people's care is well planned and coordinated. This helps to ensure that young people receive effective care which is responsive to their needs.

Staff ensure that each young person's education provision meets their individual needs and helps them to reach their full potential. Young people are all engaging well with education in their own ways. Much thought has been given to how one young person, who currently has reduced education provision, can be supported. The registered manager has been proactive in seeking out further opportunities for the young person. An education professional and the young person's social worker felt the registered manager and staff were highly supportive.

Staff are ambitious for young people and provide them with ongoing encouragement to engage in positive activities. They recognise and nurture young people's talents and ensure that their day-to-day experiences enhance their opportunities to build skills and confidence. Young people spoke of a number of interests and hobbies they enjoyed, including regular gym visits, swimming, cinema trips and trips out to various places of interest. A social worker spoke of how staff had identified one young person's talent in a particular sport and were working hard to encourage this. Staff had taken the time to carry out direct work with another young person about his interest in cars.

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

Young people receive safe, effective care and are protected from harm. They express confidence in the staff team and confirm they are able to share things that are worrying them. Managers and staff listen to young people's concerns and take appropriate action to address them.

Good-quality and individualised risk assessments means that managers and staff have a clear understanding of the risks to young people's safety and well-being. Where any risks are identified, the registered manager ensures that detailed risk management plans are in place. This means that staff have clear guidance about how to safely support young people and protect them from harm.

All staff receive safeguarding training at the start of their employment, as well as regular updates and refresher training on an ongoing basis. Staff demonstrate clear understanding of safeguarding procedures, and express confidence in the registered manager's ability to deal with any safeguarding concerns. The home has effective links with external safeguarding agencies and clear reporting procedures help to ensure that any concerns about a young person's safety are promptly escalated.

The high-quality, individualised support that young people receive at this home has resulted in a remarkable reduction in their own risk-taking behaviour. For example, two young people arrived at the home with a history of being frequently missing from their previous placements and concerns about some aspects of their behaviour. Since their admission, neither young person has been missing or presented with any concerning behaviour in the community.

To date, there have been no incidents of young people being missing from this home. However, individualised missing from home risk assessments are in place for each young person, as well as detailed action plans, which provide clear guidance for staff about the action they must take if this situation occurs in the future. This clear planning helps to ensure a co-ordinated response to minimise the risks for any young person who is missing.

Positive behaviour management is a particular strength of this home. Staff consistently promote positive behaviour by recognising and rewarding young people's achievements on a daily basis. Good-quality direct work is regularly conducted with young people to help them understand boundaries and the importance of safe and acceptable behaviour.

Staff take time to understand young people's emotional responses and support young people to manage their feelings and behaviour in a safe way. A social worker described how staff at the home had worked very positively with a young person by helping him develop effective strategies to manage his emotions. Records of incidents demonstrate that staff are skilled in de-escalating potentially volatile situations before they reach crisis. This is also supported by the fact that there have been no incidents of restraint or physical intervention in the home since it began operating.

Robust recruitment procedures mean that all prospective employees are required to undergo a range of background checks prior to being offered a post, including full employment history and police record checks. This minimises the risk of young people being exposed to adults of unsuitable character and, therefore, helps safeguard them.

There are measures in place to help ensure that young people are provided with safe and comfortable accommodation. A range of environmental audits and health and safety checks enable the registered manager to identify any potential safety issues and address them quickly.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home benefits from the leadership of a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager. The registered manager demonstrates strong person-centred values and high aspirations for the young people in his care. Young people, their parents, staff and external professionals speak extremely highly of the registered manager and describe him as effective, supportive and approachable.

The registered manager confirmed that he receives a good level of support, including regular supervision and adequate resources to run the home in a safe and effective manner. He also commented that the provider promoted positive joint working between registered managers across all the organisation's registered homes, including regular meetings where good practice could be shared.

Professionals who have been involved with the service describe positive joint working and effective responses from the service. A social worker commented, 'They are an absolute pleasure to work with. Anything you ask them to sort out is addressed immediately. This home is a credit to [name of registered provider].'

The registered manager has daily contact with young people and demonstrates a good

understanding of their needs. He carefully monitors young people's progress and takes effective action to ensure that young people receive a good level of support from all those involved in their care, including outside agencies. A number of social workers commented on the proactive approach of the registered manager and staff at the home. One social worker commented, 'They are very good at picking up on any issues and deal with them straight away.'

When considering referrals for new young people, the registered manager ensures that very careful consideration is given to the group dynamics in the home and any potential impact a new young person would have on those already living there. The registered manager commented that he never received any pressure from the provider to fill vacancies. This careful management of admissions and effective matching process helps to protect young people's well-being and demonstrates that the home is managed in their best interests.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the needs of young people and their responsibilities to support them. They are highly motivated and clearly focused on developing positive relationships with young people. Staff report a good level of support from the registered manager and express satisfaction with the training provided. Staff report a positive culture where they are able to share their views and express their opinions.

The home is well staffed by a consistent and stable staff team. There have been no staff changes since the home was registered. This means that young people receive their care from people who know and understand them well.

There is a comprehensive mandatory training programme in place, which includes a range of learning in areas such as safeguarding and positive behaviour support. All staff have received training in person-centred values, a course designed to develop staff as sensitive and supportive practitioners. Training is carefully monitored by the registered manager to ensure that all staff receive regular updates and refresher training at the required intervals. Approximately half the staff team hold nationally recognised qualifications in caring for young people and the remainder are in the process of obtaining them. All staff with supervisory roles, such as team leaders and deputy managers, are in the process of completing their level five leadership and management awards. This positive approach to training helps to ensure that young people receive their care from a skilled and knowledgeable staff team.

There are good systems in place to enable the registered manager to monitor quality and safety across the service and identify areas for development. The registered manager demonstrates commitment towards continuous improvement and uses these systems effectively. For example, he has recognised that there is a need to recruit more female staff members. The registered manager has developed a clear action plan to address this, which he regularly reviews.

The registered manager takes time to understand young people's experiences and views when assessing quality and when making plans for development. For example, he has developed some innovative ideas for monitoring, which include a very useful process of demonstrably linking young people's individual keyworker sessions to any incidents of concern. This helps to ensure that young people benefit from direct work which is

responsive to their needs and circumstances. Alongside the registered manager's development plan, sits one which young people have been encouraged to develop. The young people have engaged in this process positively and receive regular updates from the registered manager about progress of the plan. This demonstrates that the registered manager seeks to positively involve young people in the home's development.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 1240573

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Michael Swarbrick

Registered manager: Andrew Rourke

Inspector

Marie Cordingley, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2017