

1254055

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for four young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home is privately owned.

This is the first inspection of the home following registration with Ofsted in August 2017.

Inspection dates: 30 to 31 October 2017

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: first inspection following registration

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 newly admitted to the home benefit from careful planning. They have visited the home, met the staff and been welcomed on arrival.
- Young people form warm and positive relationships with the staff. They have a sense of belonging and feel cared for.
- Consultation with young people is a strength. Young people feel valued and have a strong sense of belonging. They are consistently consulted about their daily care and routines, and they contribute to regular discussions about local current affairs and world news.
- Young people enjoy living at the home. They are provided with affectionate care and support. Young people are making good progress in all aspects of their lives, because they are provided with good opportunities to explore, learn and develop new interests and hobbies.
- Staff act as effective advocates for young people, particularly around securing the young people's education provision. This results in positive changes in young people's lives.
- Most young people attend education away from the home, and this is helping to overcome significant gaps in their previous schooling. Creative approaches are used to ensure that young people enjoy both educational activities and outings arranged as a reward.
- Young people are in good health. Staff support them to have health assessments and attend their routine appointments.
- Good links with the therapy team ensure that the young people's emotional, social and psychological health needs are identified and met.
- The staff team is trained and demonstrates sound knowledge in relation to following safeguarding procedures. This keeps the young people safe.
- The management team provides effective leadership which enables staff to create a nurturing, family-type environment where young people receive consistent care.
- The management team continually focuses on improving the care for the young people, and it supports the staff well. Staff provide a consistent level of care to the young people.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Continue to develop child-focused recording, evidencing the journeys that young people experience during their time living at the home.
- Strengthen the quality of care review reporting in order to identify and monitor the future developments of the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date

Inspection type

Inspection judgement

This is the first inspection of the home following registration with Ofsted in August 2017.

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

Statutory requirement

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
<p>In order that the statement of purpose is a clear and useful document the registered person must ensure that the statement of purpose covers the matters listed in Schedule 1; ensure the statement of purpose is kept under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(1)(3)(a)(b))</p> <p>Particularly in relation to the details of the experience and qualifications of staff.</p>	30/11/2017

Recommendations

- Children should be in full-time education whilst they are of compulsory school age, unless their personal education plan contained within the care plan or other relevant plan states otherwise. The home must aim to support full time attendance at school unless the child's relevant plan indicates this is not in their best interests. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.14)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

From the time when the home was registered with Ofsted, careful and thorough pre-admission assessment has been in place. This enables the management team to understand the individual needs of the young people. Other considerations, as more young people came to live in the home, have been the compatibility of the young people, as well as the skill set of the staff team. These arrangements have ensured successful care planning, well-matched young people living together, and a home that is settled and offers stability to the young people.

The young people told the inspector that they enjoy living at the home. In the short time that they have lived at the home they feel that they have made more progress and are enjoying their new experiences. The staff have very positive and warm relationships with young people. They show real affection towards the young people and are interested in

the things that they do. The staff know individuals very well and invest time in them. They help young people to develop at an appropriate pace, taking account of their emotional needs and previous negative experiences.

This has resulted in all four young people having much greater self-confidence, increasing how they can express their views and improving their social interactions with others. One young person said that the home is 'outstanding' and, collectively, the young people said that they feel that they belong at the home.

Young people experience positive role modelling from the management team and staff. Young people quickly pick up and replicate how staff interact with them and how outcomes are better when they talk about things. Young people seek out staff to discuss their thoughts, rather than presenting negative behaviours to let staff know that they are frustrated or unhappy. Regular key-working sessions identify and seek out the young people's emotional attachment needs. The records of these sessions show discussions on how the young people feel that the staff can support them.

Young people are healthy and the staff are very sensitive to the specific individual health needs of the young people. The staff support the young people to attend health appointments, enjoy healthy eating and take part in a range of activities which keep them fit. Young people's emotional health needs are addressed with good liaison with, and input from, dieticians, mental health professionals and a therapist. None of the young people are taking prescribed medication, and systems are in place for the secure storage, administration, recording and disposal of all medication, should young people be prescribed medication or need home remedies for ailments.

The home has its own clinical psychotherapist, who works alongside the staff team and provides very good support to the young people on a weekly basis. There is a building in the grounds for therapy, providing a separate and confidential space where young people can explore their emotional, social and psychological needs. The therapist told the inspector, 'Young people are engaging with me and they have contributed their own ideas for decorating their therapy room.'

The young people are encouraged to keep up their hobbies and interests, and some participate in the local football team. They have friends in the local community, join local youth clubs and enjoy age-appropriate activities such as karting, trampoline sessions, trips to the theme park, and arts and crafts and games at the home.

Education is strongly valued by the staff. The management team and staff actively encourage the young people's attendance and educational progress by working closely with school staff. The staff are effective in liaising with educational professionals to ensure that all of the young people have suitable education provision in place. Three of the four young people are in full-time education, and plans have been secured to ensure that the fourth young person has an education provision after the October half-term break. The registered manager is confident in challenging the local authority to ensure that young people's education is given priority and that young people's needs are taken into account.

The young people receive valuable support to maintain and improve the time that they spend with families and friends. The management team and staff are persistent in engaging with families and in building relationships with them. Where contact requires supervision and transport, the staff readily provide this.

The homely, welcoming environment is maintained to a very high standard. The layout and facilities allow for different areas of use and provide the young people with privacy. The young people have personalised their bedrooms, and were decorating the home for Halloween. The group and staff celebrate all festivities and achievements with each other.

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

The home is calm and stable. There have not been any concerning incidents since the home registered with Ofsted and young people came to live at the home. Policies, procedures, training and the 'read me' file provide the staff with knowledge of safe practice and researched-informed guidance. Young people live in a pleasant and safe environment.

Safeguarding protocols and procedures, including whistleblowing, are well known and implemented by the management team and staff, who place the young people at the centre of their practice. Staff spoken with clearly demonstrate their knowledge of the procedures to follow, should any safeguarding concerns for the young people arise. There are clear flowcharts displayed to direct the staff to what they should do if they have a concern, even if the concern is about another professional. This includes referral to the appropriate safeguarding agencies and the contact details of the local authority designated officer.

All staff are trained in the issues of safeguarding, child sexual exploitation and radicalisation, and the young people and staff have shared relevant training in respect of bullying, how to make a complaint, online safety, grooming and keeping safe when using social networking sites.

Risk assessment forms part of everyday life at the home and staff are aware of any strategies that they need to deploy, should the young people's risks increase. The staff constantly work to identify, monitor and mitigate risks. The management team produces concise and effective risk and behaviour management plans which cover each young person's needs and which they use to underpin the care that they provide. The location risk assessment includes all of the key local issues that are relevant to the home and the protection of the young people.

Although there have not been any missing from home incidents involving the young people, the staff are aware of the procedures to follow and their responsibilities in reporting such incidents. There are systems in place for the young people to have a return home interview so that staff can develop intelligence or understand any patterns or trends, should incidents of going missing from home occur.

The young people speak positively about their key workers, whom they feel they can talk to and trust. The staff take what young people say seriously and help them to work through their difficult emotions. Key-working sessions give young people time for problem solving and reflection on their time spent at the home. External professionals, such as an easily accessed clinical psychotherapist, provide young people with purposeful therapeutic insight into their emotions, attachments and behaviours.

Behaviour management strategies are provided by a range of professionals and implemented by the staff, and achieve good outcomes for the young people. There have been no restraints and no negative consequences, and the records show the praise achieved, and the rewards received, by the young people during their time at the home.

Young people are kept safe as a result of the organisation's thorough recruitment and vetting system. The registered manager is fully involved in shortlisting new candidates and verifying references, and is involved in recruitment interviews. Visitors to the home are checked and monitored. Appropriate measures are in place in relation to young people's health and safety, such as fire evacuation drills and checks of the premises and equipment. These arrangements keep the young people, staff and visitors safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is appropriately qualified and has extensive experience in residential childcare. A competent senior practitioner supports him. Together, they lead and support the new staff team well. Both are within regulatory timescales of completing their level 5 leadership and management qualification.

Inclusive of the management team, there are sufficient staff at the home to provide a good level of support to the young people. Five staff are experienced and qualified to level 3 or above, and the other five staff are enrolled on their level 3 qualification. Those staff with little or no residential experience are always on shift with an experienced and qualified lead practitioner.

All staff have undertaken the organisation's full induction into the home and have completed all of their necessary training. They demonstrate a sound knowledge in relation to the home's policies and procedures and how these are implemented in practice to contribute to the running of the home and the care being provided to the young people.

The management team and lead practitioners provide and receive good support through supervision. Team meetings and daily handovers are reflective of practice, where experiences are shared and knowledge is gained. There are effective arrangements in place to assess the staff's competencies and provide them with further support and guidance.

The staff team is enthusiastic about its work, new staff are keen to learn and all staff are committed to providing positive outcomes for the young people. This is evident as they

plan carefully, have consistent daily routines and place a strong emphasis on the young people's practical skills and interests. The young people's journey files are in the early stages of development and, when implemented, will tell the story of the experiences and progress that the young people make at the home. These documents will be useful as young people move on or reflect in later life about their time spent at the home.

During the registration process, the registered manager submitted the home's statement of purpose to Ofsted. Since this application for the registration of the home, new staff have joined the home and the document has been updated. However, it has not been forwarded to Ofsted, as required by regulation. This means that the regulator has not been made aware of any changes or informed of the qualifications and the experiences of the staff at the home. As a result, a requirement is made.

The registered manager has effective monitoring systems in place and uses the independent person's monthly report to improve the services provided to the young people at the home. Further improvements would strengthen the management team's quality of care report in order to focus on specific areas of the home's future developments and how these are to be achieved.

The young people's case files are up to date and contain all of the necessary paperwork, including children looked after documentation from placing authorities. These documents provide the staff with useful information which they use daily in order to meet the needs of the young people. It is evident that the young people contribute to the records kept at the home, and each young person has their own 'my placement plan'. The young people told the inspector that they have access to the information written about them.

The management team and staff pay careful attention to encouraging equality and diversity. Where necessary, they provide support to develop young people's understanding, enabling young people to develop their tolerance, appreciation and knowledge of others. The young people's weekly meetings always cover local current affairs and world news. This keeps the young people regularly informed and encourages discussions of events happening around them.

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 whom 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: 1254055

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Lee Prescott

Registered manager: Graham Ayres

Inspector

Mark Kersh, social care inspector

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