

1240573

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

Interim 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. The home may provide care and accommodation for single gender occupancy only.

Inspection date: 30 January 2018

Judgement at last inspection: Good

Date of last inspection: 9 May 2017

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection.
At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

Young people admitted to the home have displayed unsettled and disruptive behaviours that staff have not previously experienced. Staff have responded well to the increased demands and complexity of caring for young people who, for a variety of reasons, display behaviour that has been difficult to manage. Staff continue to develop positive and trusting relationships with young people that enable them to offer good support when young people are in crisis.

The home has discharged three young people since its last full inspection. One was discharged due to a very serious assault on staff, although prior to this he had been progressing well. Another young person was discharged due to showing aggression towards other young people in the home. There was already a plan in place to move this young person, which was expedited following these incidents. A third young person was

discharged due to his placing authority not having the agreed funding in place at the point of placement.

Three young people have been admitted to the home. At the time of admission, one young person's risks were not fully shared with the manager. When the increased risks became evident, the company prevented any further admissions to the home so that the young person could have increased staffing levels to monitor and supervise him. This prevented him from posing a risk to other young people in placement. The home's manager completes impact risk assessments for any new admission to explore whether their risks would be compatible with the risks of the young people already placed.

Young people currently living in the home are progressing very well. One young person has developed in maturity and emotional regulation. He frequently used to run off when upset, but now has better control over his impulse to run away. He speaks to others politely and respectfully, which is a progression for him, and he now has fewer emotional outbursts. Another young person was not in education and has been successfully integrated into full-time education.

A young person whose admission information stated that he liked to isolate himself from others and spend time mainly in his own room will now spend time with other young people playing on their Xbox. He also enjoys a variety of activities, including regular trips to the local gym, with staff. Professionals attending his child looked after review recognised the huge improvements that he had made in school, including a significant increase in his attendance, since he moved into the home. A young person who recently moved into the home said: 'It's really good. I like it much better than my old home. It is much calmer and I get on with the staff a lot better.'

Young people said that they get along well with each other. Prior to his discharge, one young person was involved in two incidents of physical assault on other young people. These were dealt with by staff, who intervened and also carried out key-working sessions with both the perpetrator and the victims. A restoration meeting was held for the young people involved. This helped them to understand the impact of their behaviour on others and encouraged them to be accountable for their actions. Young people spoken to said that they feel safe in the home, and that other young people do not threaten or frighten them.

Some young people have high levels of contact with family members. The home supports these by providing transport and also money, so that the finances of parents and carers are not adversely affected by their child's visit.

The home has seen an increase in restrictive physical intervention since the previous inspection. This coincides with the admission of young people who have challenged staff and shown risk-taking behaviours. While staff have intervened only when appropriate to do so, some of the holds that have been used are not recognised by the company's training model for physical intervention (MAPA). The manager does not yet have a system in place for monitoring the types of hold used, and for addressing incidents with staff to identify other types of hold that could be used. He does, however, provide an evaluation of each physical intervention.

The home has also seen an increase in allegations. The manager has dealt with these robustly, involving the police, social workers and the designated officer. When there have been difficulties in communication with social workers, the manager escalates communication to team managers to get a response. Allegations have been investigated and are unsubstantiated. The designated officer reported that the registered manager is responsive and that they had no concerns about the practice in the home.

Missing-from-home incidents are infrequent. When they do occur, staff at the home search the locality for young people. Staff liaise with the police and follow their missing-from-home procedure. Young people are offered independent return interviews after going missing, and key workers hold discussions with young people about their missing incident.

Young people have additional support from a psychotherapist who sees each young person on a weekly basis. The psychotherapist also provides help, support and education to staff to help them deliver individual care in a therapeutically supportive way. The therapist reports that staff are very good at listening and putting her advice and suggestions into practice with young people. Young people therefore benefit from care that is tailored to their needs and supports them effectively.

Staff at the home report that they enjoy working there, receive support from managers and have good access to training. The staff team is made up entirely of men. Young people spoken to did not identify this as problematic for them. They reported that they got on well with all the staff. However, young people would benefit from positive female role models and the opportunity to develop attachments to female care givers. This is identified by the home's manager and therapist as an area for development and is made as a recommendation at this inspection.

The manager has thorough monitoring systems in place which enable him to identify any deficits in practice or areas for improvement. He has good understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses and makes plans to address areas identified for development. He welcomes feedback from the independent visitor and feels she is a useful source of advice and support.

No recommendations or requirements were made at the home's first inspection. At this inspection, although two recommendations are made, this does not detract from the high standard of care young people receive.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/05/2017	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly when any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure that it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- Whenever possible, staff in day-to-day contact with children should include staff from the different gender groups. When the home's statement of purpose makes it explicit that the home uses staff of one sex only, clear guidance will need to be in place and followed as to how children are enabled to maintain relationships with people of a different gender. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.22)

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 differences 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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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: Sandcastle Care Ltd, 49 Whitegate Drive, Blackpool, Lancashire FY3 9DG

Responsible individual: Joann Snelson

Registered manager: Andrew Rourke

Inspector

Charlie Bamber, social care inspector

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