

1240573

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home provides care and accommodation for single-gender occupancy only.

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 October 2018

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: 30 January 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/05/2017	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- The children's guide must be age appropriate, provided in an accessible format and explained to each child to make sure they understand it. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.21)
- Where there is a possibility that a child will run away or go missing from a children's home placement, their placement plan should include strategies to minimise the risk. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.24)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people live in a nurturing and supportive home that provides them with an environment where those who have experienced disruption can establish predictable routines that enable them to develop and thrive.

Young people are very happy and settled. Staff provide individualised support, and this is helping young people to make good progress in different aspects of their development. A young person said, 'I like living here. I get along with all the staff; they are friendly and supportive, and I know they care about me. I feel like my self-confidence has grown a lot since living here.'

Staff promote education well, working in partnership with schools and teachers to support individual educational progress. As a result, young people enjoy excellent attendance at school and have developed a positive attitude to learning.

Staff recognise the importance of family relationships and go to considerable lengths to ensure that these are promoted and improved. Staff demonstrate a detailed understanding of each young person and their family relationships. They work proactively with parents and partner agencies to ensure that contact is safe, enjoyable and promotes continuity of care.

Activities are encouraged and promoted. Young people access a range of leisure pursuits to increase their social and recreational opportunities. This helps them to develop their friendships outside of the home and gain additional skills and interests.

Young people's views are sought through day-to-day interactions with staff, young people's meetings and regular discussions with the manager. They feel confident to express their wishes and feelings and have sufficiently trusting relationships with staff to speak openly.

Young people live in a large, suitably designed and comfortable home that is furnished and maintained to a good standard. Young people like their home and take pride in it. This is a comfortable home where young people feel relaxed, safe and happy.

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

Staff are highly skilled in identifying risks and ensure that young people are supported to become increasingly safe.

Safeguarding arrangements are effective, and keeping young people safe is integral to daily practice. Young people confirmed that they feel safe and are confident that they could talk to a number of staff, including the manager, if they were worried or concerned.

Young people benefit from clear and consistent boundaries and expectations. Responses to each young person's behaviour are regularly discussed and reviewed for effectiveness.

Positive behaviour is acknowledged using praise and reward. Negative behaviour is challenged appropriately, and staff make good use of individual sessions to help young people reflect. This provides young people with a good learning opportunity to consider alternative strategies that may help them.

The manager completes a risk assessment for each young person. However, these documents do not consistently contain information about when to contact the police if a young person goes missing from the home. This means that there is a lack of clear guidance for staff to follow, and this could lead to misinformed practice. To date, this has not affected the quality of the care that the young people receive. However, if unchecked it has the potential to do so.

Staff empower young people to take age-appropriate risks necessary for their continual development. The staff team strikes a balance between promoting independence and taking measured risk. This enables most young people to enjoy independent free time with their friends out in the community. Clear expectations are in place and staff maintain regular contact with young people when they are away from the home. As a result, young people can enjoy appropriate freedoms that do not compromise their safety.

The recruitment of staff is a process that takes account of safer recruitment practices. Staff receive a full induction before they start work with young people, including a full range of mandatory training. This promotes the safety of young people and prevents unsafe adults from working at the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager, along with the deputy manager, effectively prioritises the needs of young people. They place each individual young person at the centre of their practice and ensure that their needs are met and that they have every opportunity to achieve.

The home is well staffed by a stable, motivated, competent and dedicated staff team. This means that young people receive their care from people who know and understand them well.

Staff benefit from regular, good-quality, practice-related supervision. This provides them with the opportunity to discuss their work, learn new skills and reflect on practice issues. Staff reported that they work well together and said that morale in the team is very good.

All staff have their performance reviewed annually. Personal development plans are formulated and are routinely monitored by managers, who ensure that targets are being met. This includes ensuring that those staff who need to complete relevant qualifications do so within agreed timescales.

The manager has a realistic understanding of the strengths of the home and promptly addresses areas where improvements can be made. He has addressed the recommendations from the last inspection. This demonstrates his commitment to improving the care the home provides to young people.

The manager regularly monitors the quality of care provided in the home, learning from practice and seeking feedback from young people to improve their care and experiences. External monitoring is also effective. Shortfalls are quickly identified, and prompt action is taken to affect improvements. This results in a home where there is ambition to provide good care to young people.

Case records are well organised and provide a good picture of the young people's progress and experiences of living at this home. However, the children's guide requires some revision. In its current form, this document is cumbersome and does not take account of young people's learning needs. During the inspection, the manager identified ways to make the document more child-friendly.

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.

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: Joann Snelson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Ceri Evans, social care inspector

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