

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 provides care for up to four children of a single gender (male). The provider states in its statement of purpose that it provides care for children aged between seven and 16 on admission and based on the accommodation needs of the individual child.

The manager has been in post since August 2020.

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

Inspection dates: 15 to 16 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: 23 July 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/07/2019	Full	Good
23/10/2018	Full	Good
30/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/05/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children spoken to during this inspection said that they were happy living at this home. They said that staff were fun, chilled-out and didn't 'hassle' them too much. That said, the children are all in positive routines and have clear rules and boundaries.

Children and staff have good relationships. This results in children feeling confident that their needs will be met, and that staff will always have time to listen to them. Some excellent examples of life-story work have been done with children. This has been supported by the home's therapist, who plays an essential role in the children's lives. The life-story work is delivered sensitively. This has had a significant and positive impact on the boys' understanding of their past and has given them the opportunity to process their trauma.

All four children currently living at the home are in education and making very good progress. This is a fantastic achievement because most of them were not in education before they arrived at the home. One child has secured a part-time job in a garage, which will hopefully result in an apprenticeship there for him. This gives children more opportunities for future education and employment.

Children are settled. They get along with each other and with staff. This results in a calm environment where they can thrive.

Children reported that they did not spend much time with one another. Over periods of lockdown during the pandemic, children often spent a lot of time in their own bedrooms, gaming. While this was acceptable under the circumstances, a recommendation is made in relation to encouraging them to now spend more time in the communal areas of the home and out in the community, engaging in a wider range of activities.

Two children have had planned transitions back to their parents' care. This shows that staff work in conjunction with placing authorities to progress the children's care plans. One child, who had a short placement, made incredible progress during his stay, and was quickly returned to his parent's care.

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

Children who live at this home are safe. They reported feeling safe all the time. Staff are knowledgeable about children's risks and understand their own roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. Risks in most areas reduce over time. This shows that risk-reduction strategies are effective. Risk assessments and behaviour-support plans are clear and individualised. Plans are kept up to date and additions are clearly recorded. This ensures that all staff know when a change has been made to a child's risk assessment or behaviour-support plan.

Children rarely put themselves at risk. They make positive choices to keep themselves safe. This is underpinned by both positive relationships with staff and high-quality direct work that improves children's understanding of risks and how to keep themselves safe.

There have been no physical interventions for a considerable amount of time. Behavioural incidents reduce from the start of children's placements. Consequences or sanctions are rarely used. There have been some missing-from-care incidents for one child, but these are reducing. All this results in a safe and settled home for the children.

Not all staff have received training around suicide and self-harm awareness. This is noted as a shortfall due to one of the children having a high-risk level in this area. A requirement is made with the intention of ensuring that all staff receive this relevant training to keep the child safe.

Matching or impact risk assessments are undertaken prior to a child moving to the home. These assess the referred child's risks in relation to the current residents' risks to establish whether a placement is viable from a risk-management perspective. The impact assessments also cross-reference to the safe-area report and consider whether any locality risks may have an impact for the referred child. This is a good example of comprehensive and proactive risk assessment.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Children benefit from a stable and consistent staff team. The team is largely made up of males, which children reported they liked. Any changes to the staff team are handled sensitively by bringing new staff in for a handover period before other staff leave. This allows children to build relationships with new staff while still benefiting from the consistency of more established staff, thus minimising disruption.

The home's manager is a strong advocate for children. He understands them well and ensures that staff deliver care in line with children's individual needs. He is committed to effecting positive change and providing a positive care experience while children are in his care and goes to great lengths to achieve this.

The manager has developed relationships with a wide range of agencies. He works in partnership to ensure that joined-up care is delivered. External professionals spoken to as part of this inspection were glowing in their praise for the manager, the home in general and the progress that children make while living there.

Staff say that they are well supported. They receive regular supervision and have access to a broad range of training. Senior managers are also regularly visible in the home. Staff say that they feel confident about management support and would feel comfortable approaching more senior managers within the company.

One requirement is made under leadership and management relating to children's records. This is to ensure that meeting minutes and plans are obtained from children's placing authorities within a reasonable timescale from the looked after children's review taking place. The other requirements made at the last inspection are met at this inspection, which evidences that managers act when shortfalls are identified.

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

Statutory requirements

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>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iii))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that all staff have training around suicide and self-harm awareness.</p>	20 July 2021
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child. (Regulation 36 (1)(a))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that minutes of local authority looked after children meetings and updated care plans are requested and obtained from the placing authority.</p>	20 July 2021

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children are encouraged to spend less time in their bedrooms on computer games and engage in a broader range of activities in and outside the home. ('Guide to the children's home's regulations including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.5)

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: 1240573

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

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

Responsible individual: David Crow

Registered manager: Richard Taylor

Inspector

Charlie Bamber, Social Care Inspector

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